

WILLINGHAM • BUCKINGHAM • BRAUN

F A B L E S

VERTIGO



MY BUSINESS IN THE MUNDY WORLD WAS LONG COMPLETED, BUT CURIOSITY KEPT ME FROM GOING HOME.

THE VAGABOND KNIGHT WINS AGAIN!

NO!



UP AT THE FARM, ROSE RED HAD SET OUT TO ESTABLISH A NEW *CAMELOT*.

DON'T CALL ME THAT!

I'M NO KNIGHT. THERE'S NARY A *MOTE* OF NOBILITY TO BE FOUND IN ME.



HAVING BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN BIRTHING THE *FIRST* ONE, HOW COULD I NOT TARRY TO SEE ITS REPRISE?

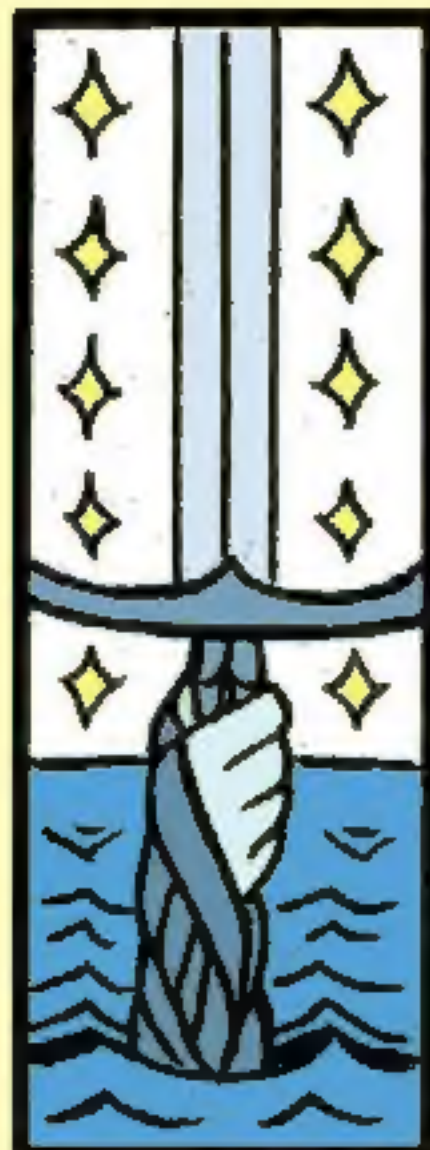
AT BEST I COME AS A BEGGAR AT THE DOOR.



A Day at the Lake

Part Five of

Camelot



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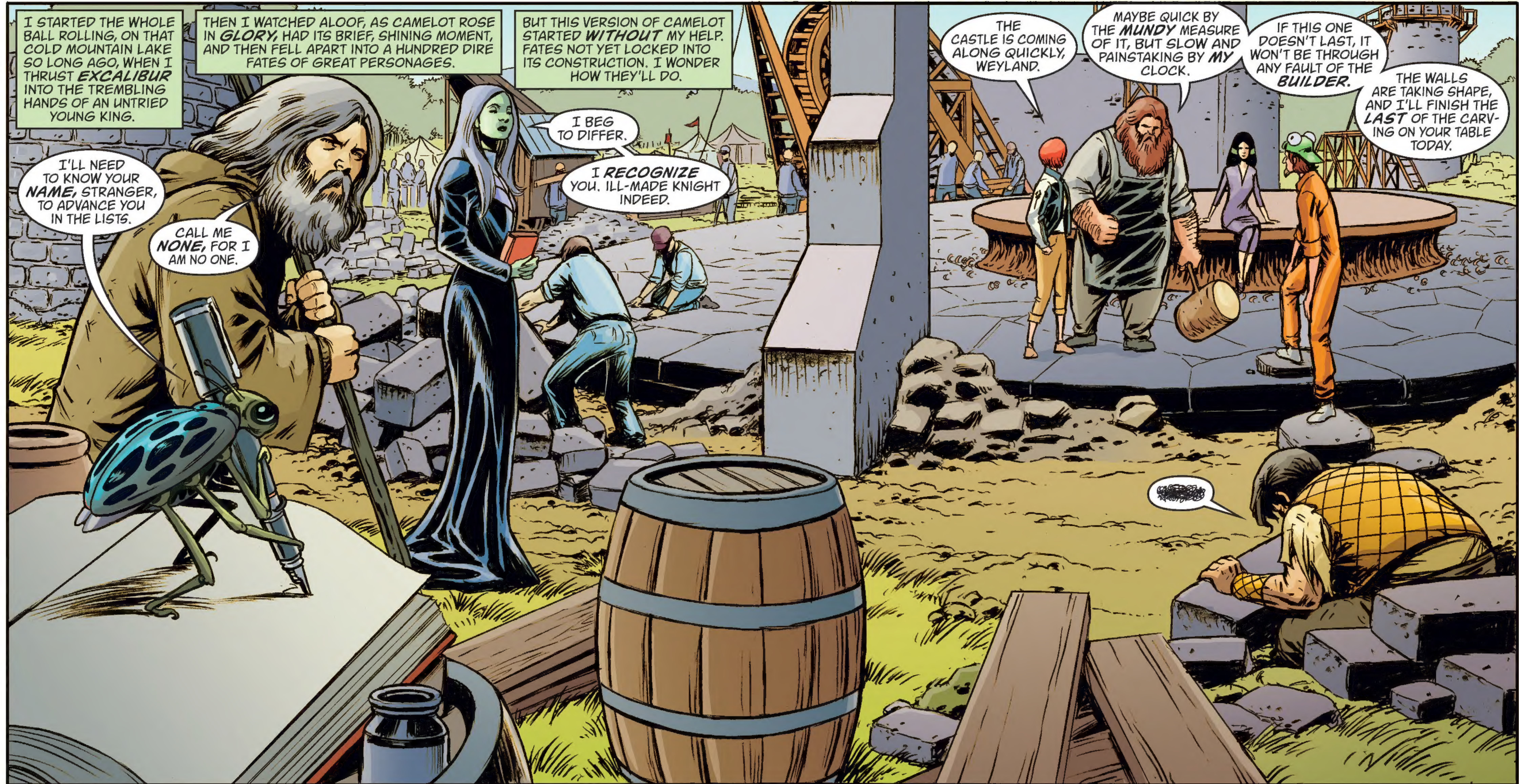
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I STARTED THE WHOLE BALL ROLLING, ON THAT COLD MOUNTAIN LAKE SO LONG AGO, WHEN I THRUST EXCALIBUR INTO THE TREMBLING HANDS OF AN UNTRIED YOUNG KING.

THEN I WATCHED ALOOF, AS CAMELOT ROSE IN *GLORY*, HAD ITS BRIEF, SHINING MOMENT, AND THEN FELL APART INTO A HUNDRED DIRE FATES OF GREAT PERSONAGES.

BUT THIS VERSION OF CAMELOT STARTED *WITHOUT* MY HELP. FATES NOT YET LOCKED INTO ITS CONSTRUCTION. I WONDER HOW THEY'LL DO.

I'LL NEED TO KNOW YOUR *NAME*, STRANGER, TO ADVANCE YOU IN THE LISTS.

CALL ME *NONE*, FOR I AM NO ONE.

I BEG TO DIFFER.

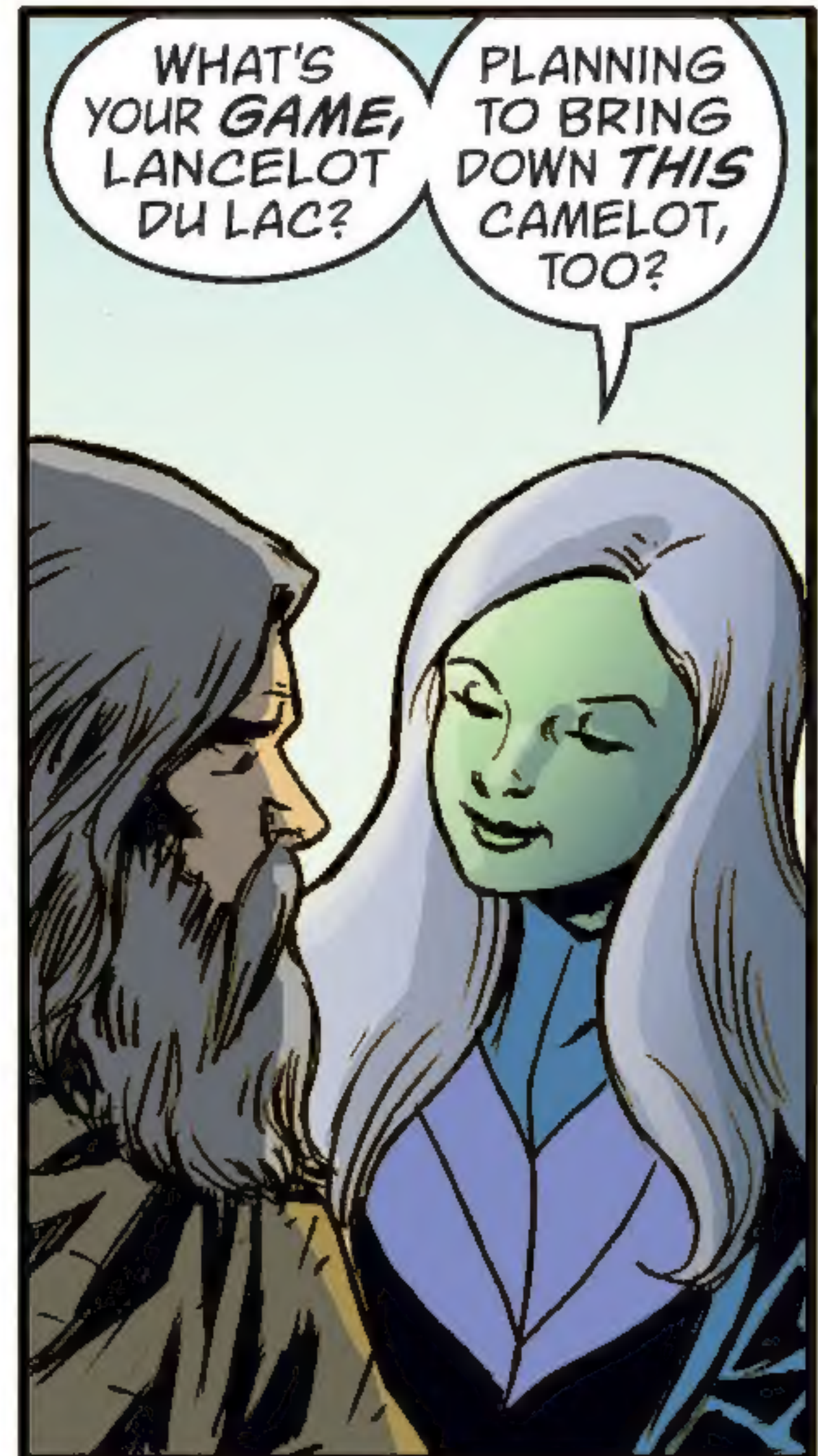
I *RECOGNIZE* YOU. ILL-MADE KNIGHT INDEED.

THE CASTLE IS COMING ALONG QUICKLY, WEYLAND.

MAYBE QUICK BY THE *MUNDY* MEASURE OF IT, BUT SLOW AND PAINSTAKING BY *MY* CLOCK.

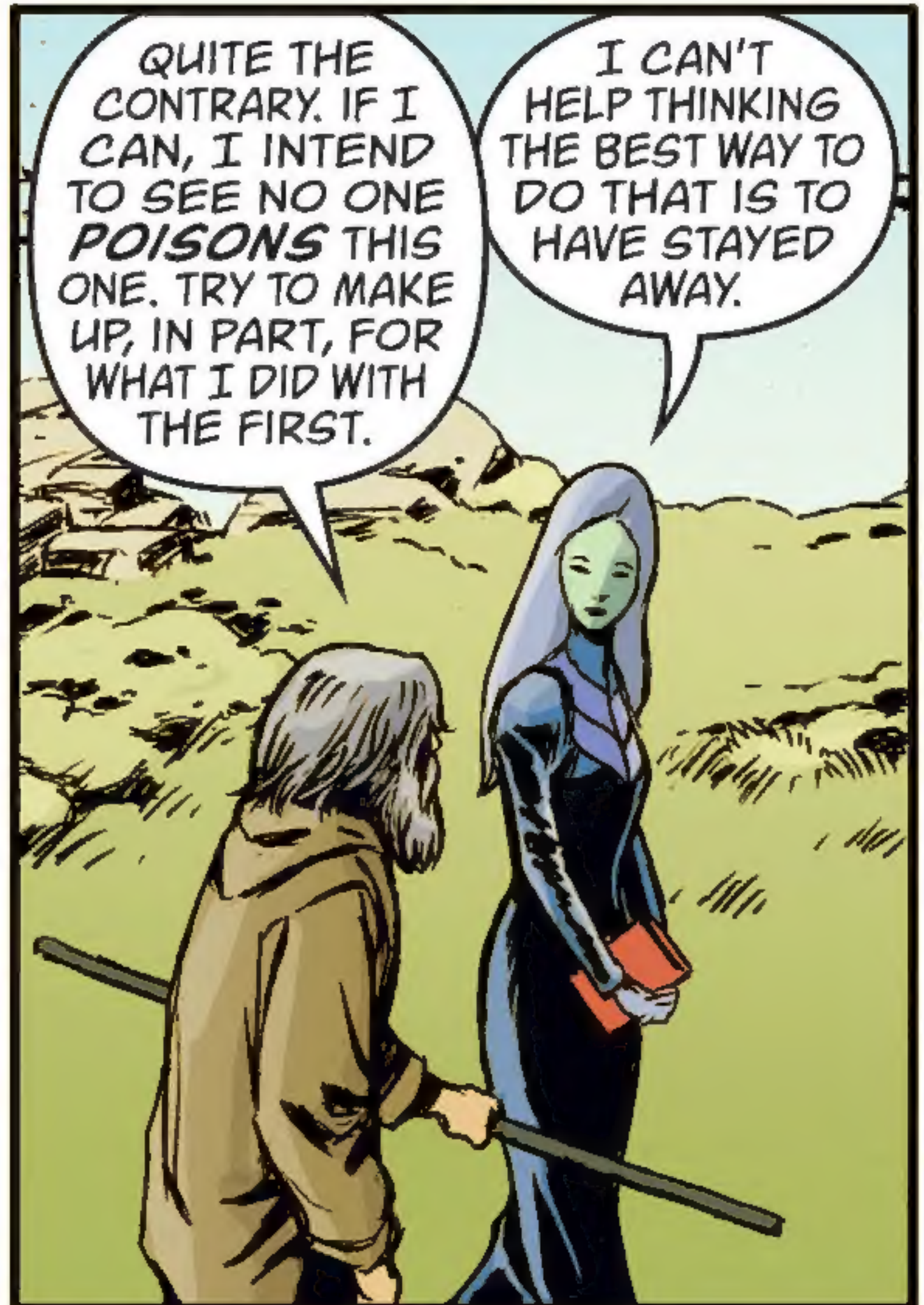
IF THIS ONE DOESN'T LAST, IT WON'T BE THROUGH ANY FAULT OF THE *BUILDER*.

THE WALLS ARE TAKING SHAPE, AND I'LL FINISH THE *LAST* OF THE CARVING ON YOUR TABLE TODAY.



WHAT'S YOUR *GAME*, LANCELOT DU LAC?

PLANNING TO BRING DOWN *THIS* CAMELOT, TOO?



QUITE THE CONTRARY. IF I CAN, I INTEND TO SEE NO ONE *POISONS* THIS ONE. TRY TO MAKE UP, IN PART, FOR WHAT I DID WITH THE FIRST.

I CAN'T HELP THINKING THE BEST WAY TO DO THAT IS TO HAVE STAYED AWAY.



THAT WAS MY PLAN.

BUT I WAS DRAWN BACK ONCE I HEARD *SECOND* CHANCES ARE THE ENTIRE *PURPOSE* BEHIND THIS UNDERTAKING.



ULTIMATELY I COULDN'T RESIST THE CHANCE TO DO IT ALL AGAIN, BUT GET IT *RIGHT* THIS TIME.

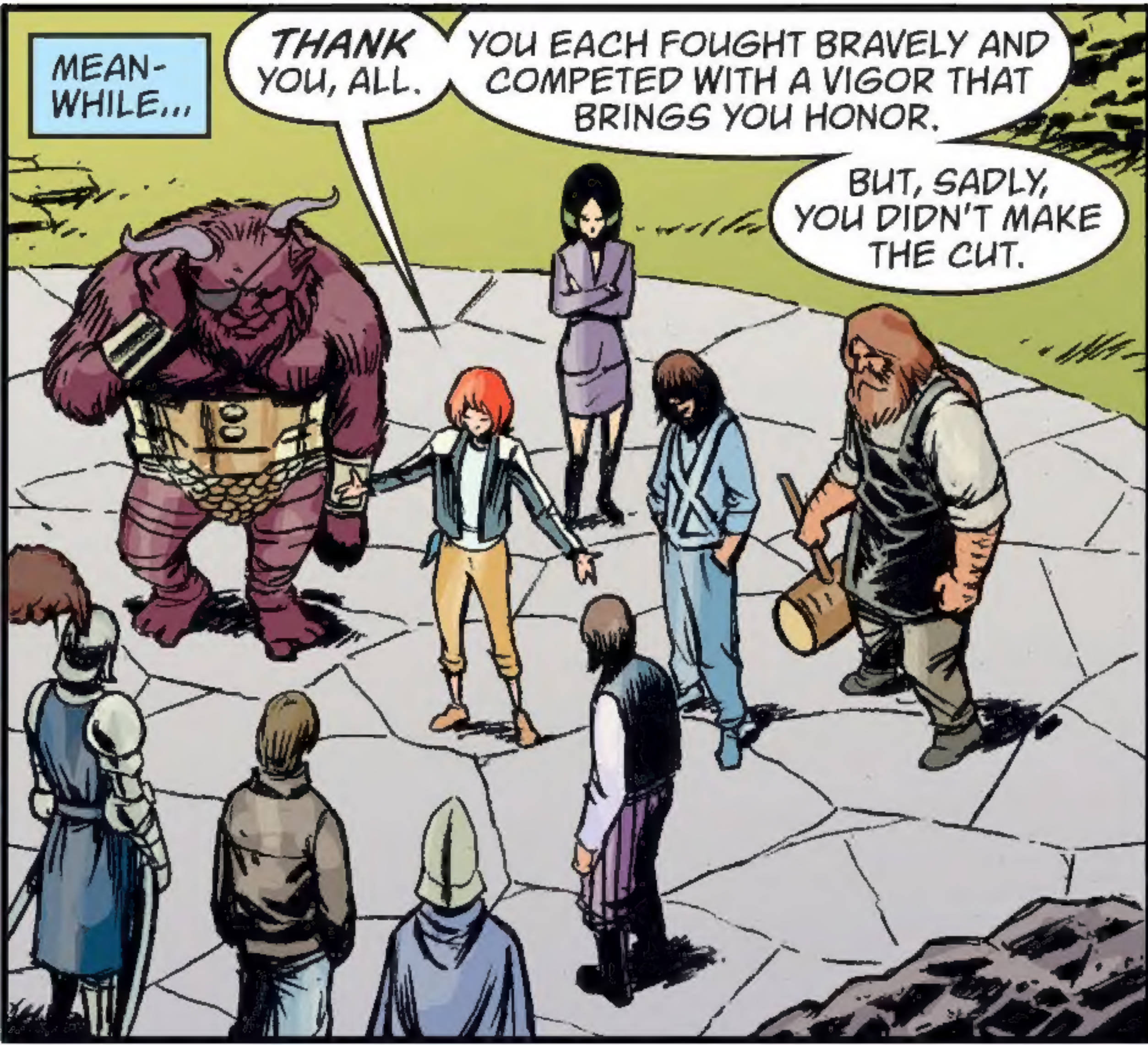
MAYBE ENOUGH TO REMOVE A LINK OR TWO FROM MY CHAIN OF SINS.



ARE YOU GOING TO *EXPOSE* ME, FAIRY WOMAN?

PROBABLY.

WE'LL SEE.



MEAN-
WHILE...

THANK
YOU, ALL.

YOU EACH FOUGHT BRAVELY AND
COMPETED WITH A VIGOR THAT
BRINGS YOU HONOR.

BUT, SADLY,
YOU DIDN'T MAKE
THE CUT.

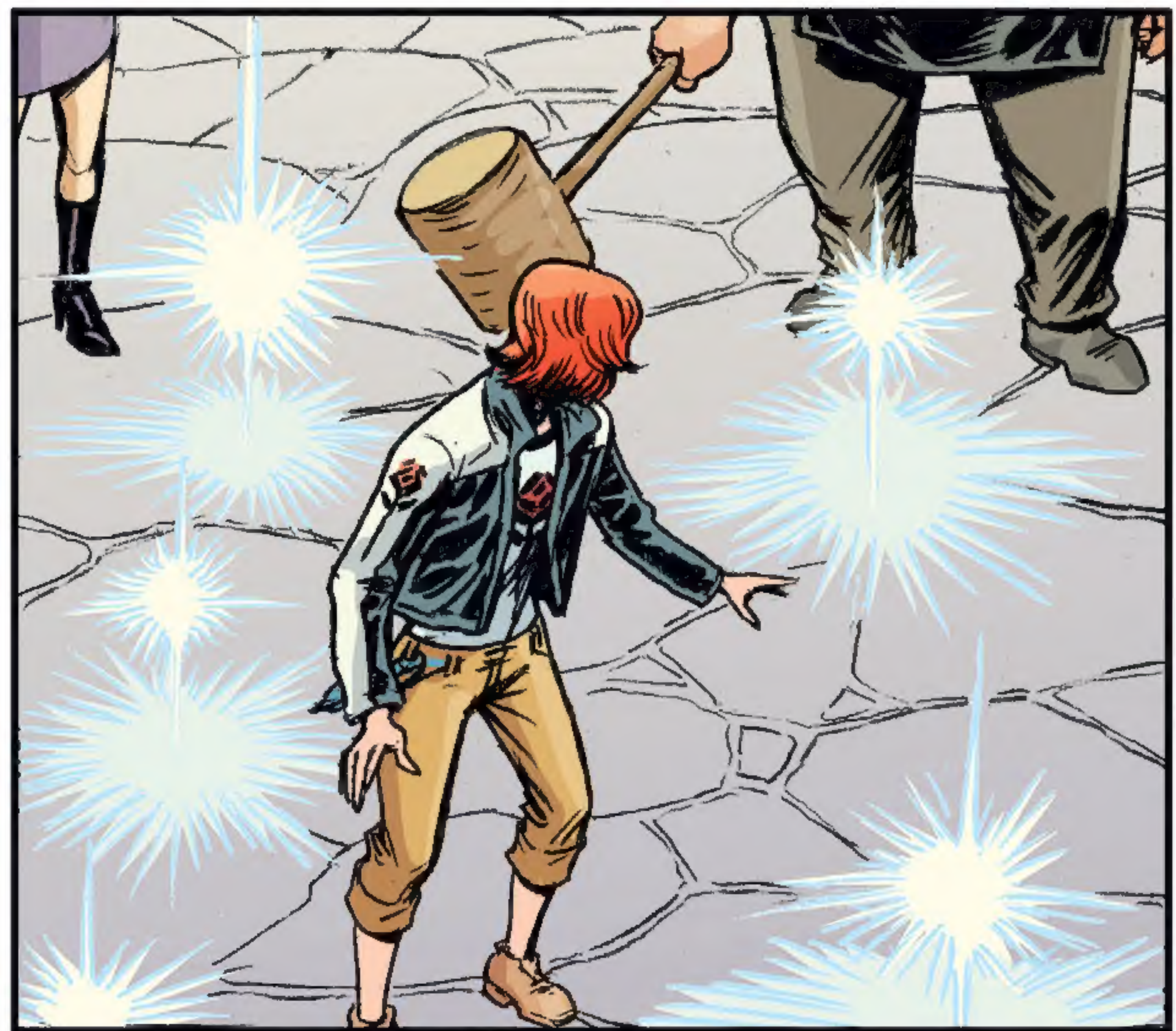


YOU WON'T
BECOME
KNIGHTS
IN MY NEW
ORDER.

HOWEVER, I
TRUST YOU'LL
CONTINUE TO
LIVE AND ACT
IN A MANNER
CONSISTENT
WITH OUR
GOALS.



FOR NOW, THOUGH,
YOU'RE FREE TO
RETURN HOME.



UH...

WHO
DID
THAT?



I THINK MAYBE
YOU DID.

HOW?



SOON...

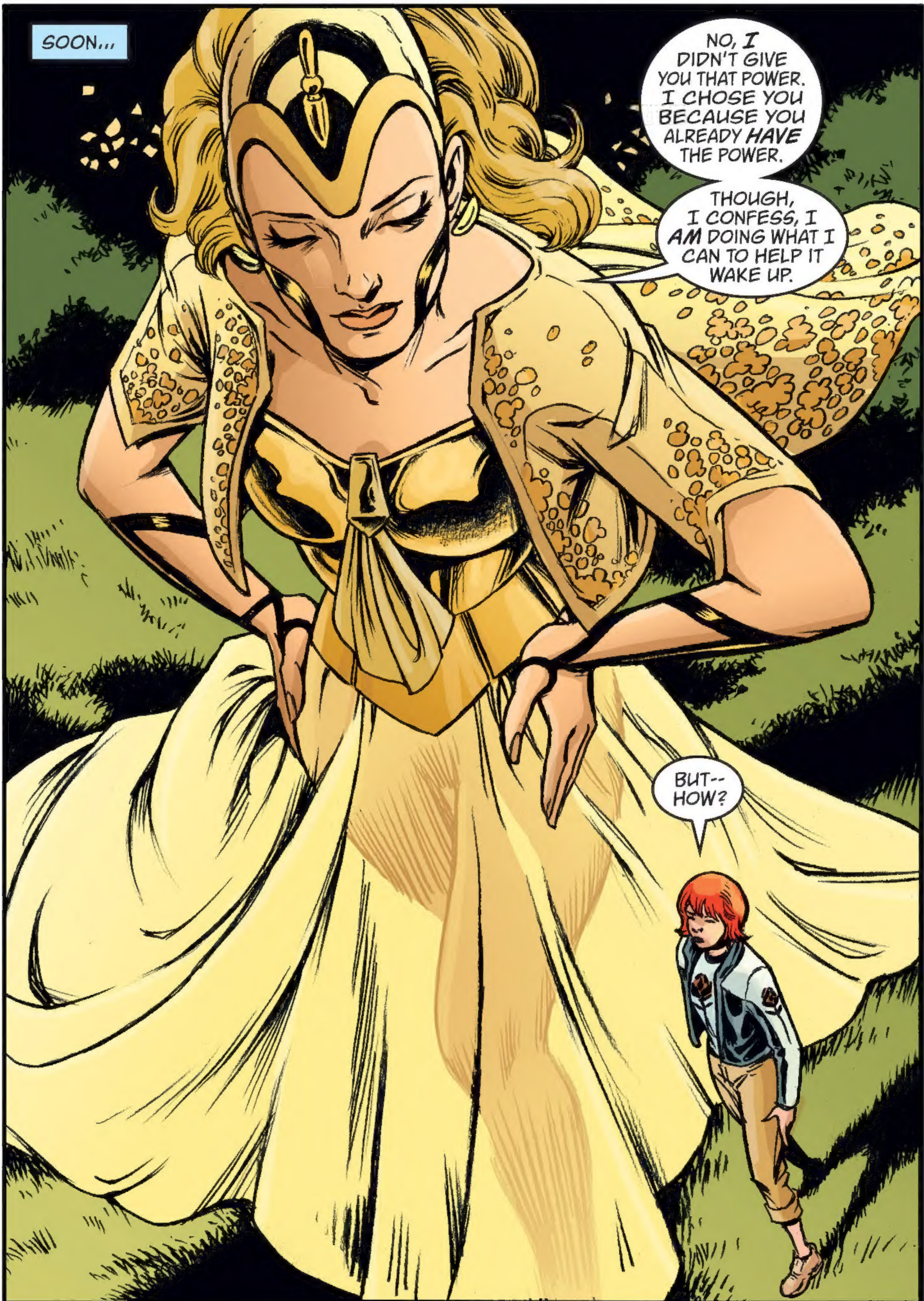
NO, I DIDN'T GIVE YOU THAT POWER. I CHOSE YOU BECAUSE YOU ALREADY HAVE THE POWER.

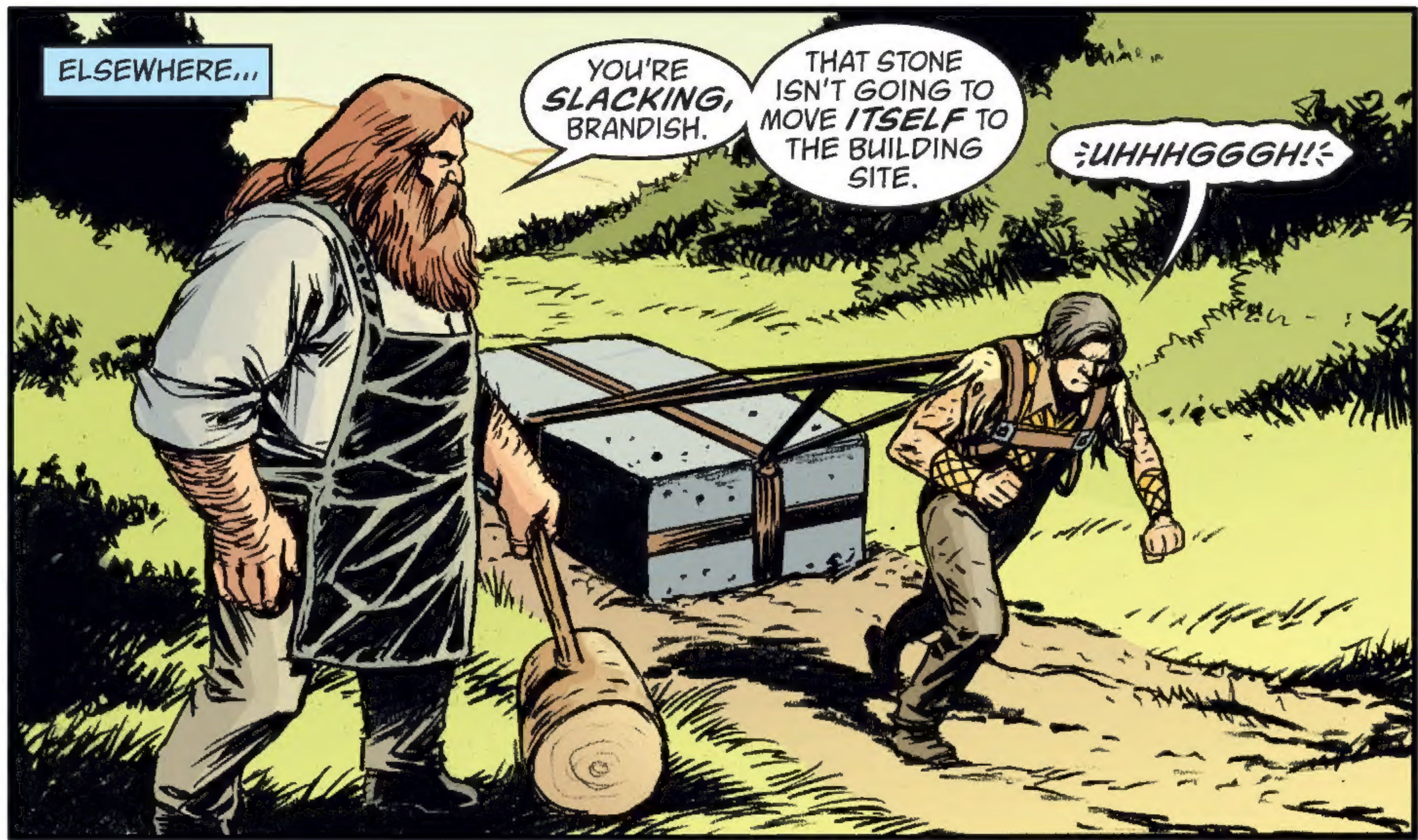
THOUGH, I CONFESS, I AM DOING WHAT I CAN TO HELP IT WAKE UP.

BUT-- HOW?

YOU'VE ONE AMONG YOU WHO'S SEEN ALL THE EVENTS OF YOUR LIFE, AND THE FATEFUL DAYS THAT PRECEDED IT.

PERHAPS YOU SHOULD STRIKE UP A CONVERSATION.





ELSEWHERE...

YOU'RE SLACKING, BRANDISH.

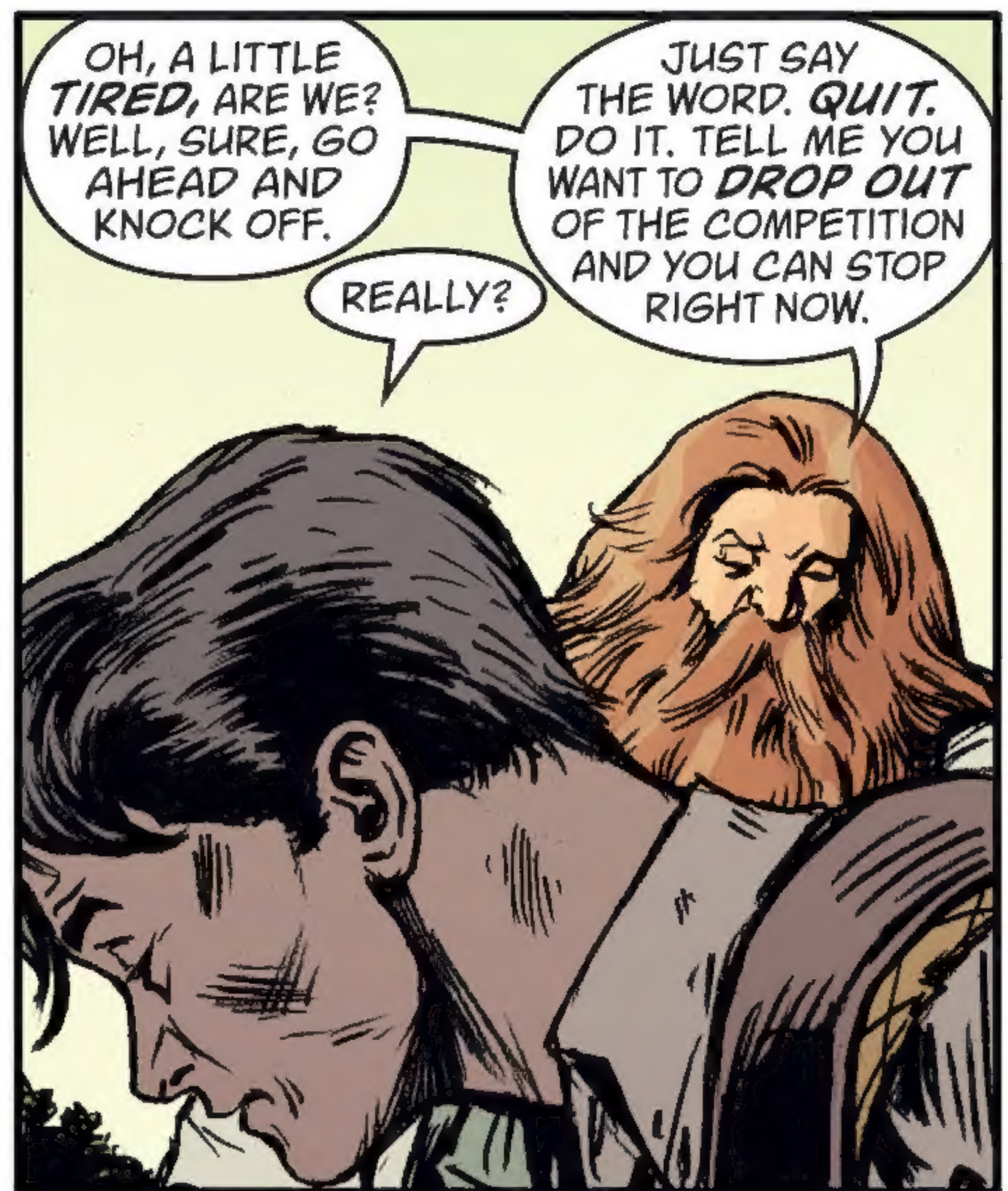
THAT STONE ISN'T GOING TO MOVE *ITSELF* TO THE BUILDING SITE.

UHHHGGGGH!



I--CAN'T HELP--BUT--NOTICE--

--EVERYONE-- ELSE--HAS--QUIT-- URRGG--WORK--FOR--THE--DAY.



OH, A LITTLE TIRED, ARE WE? WELL, SURE, GO AHEAD AND KNOCK OFF.

REALLY?

JUST SAY THE WORD. QUIT. DO IT. TELL ME YOU WANT TO **DROP OUT** OF THE COMPETITION AND YOU CAN STOP RIGHT NOW.



I'LL CHAIN YOU BACK IN THE PIT **IMMEDIATELY** AND YOU CAN GET ALL THE **REST** YOU WANT.

CENTURIES, AT LEAST.



NEVER--MIND.

I'LL--GET--THIS--GRAY--BASTARD--MOVED.





LATER THAT NIGHT...

SERIOUSLY?

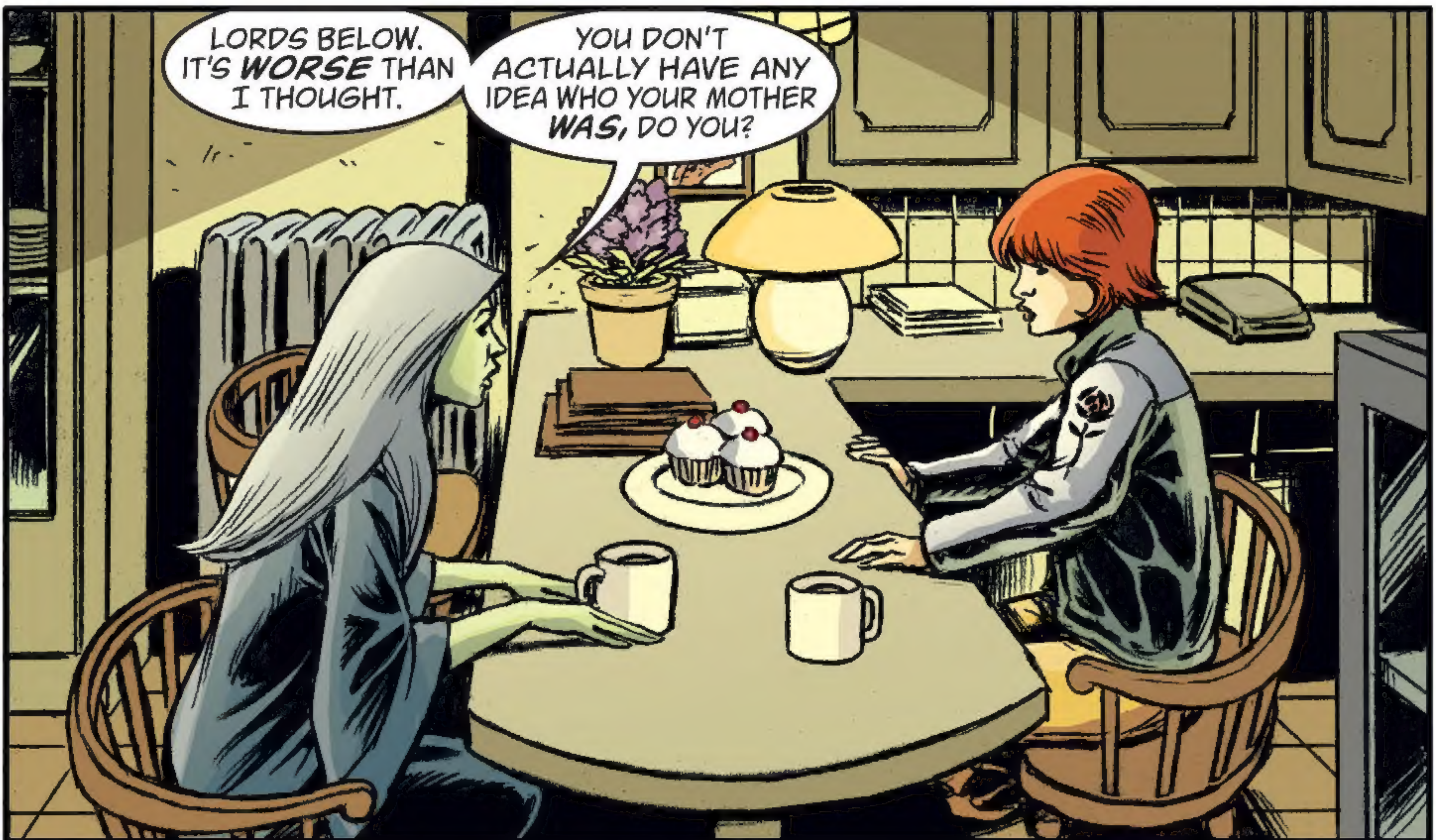
YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW?



WHEN YOUR MOTHER VOWED TO LET IT **FADE** IN HER, OF COURSE SHE'D PASS IT ON TO THE TWO OF YOU.

IT WAS THE **OBVIOUS** MOVE, SINCE THOSE IDIOTS DIDN'T THINK TO COVER THAT **CONTINGENCY** IN THEIR BARGAIN.

I HAVEN'T THE FIRST **CLUE** WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.



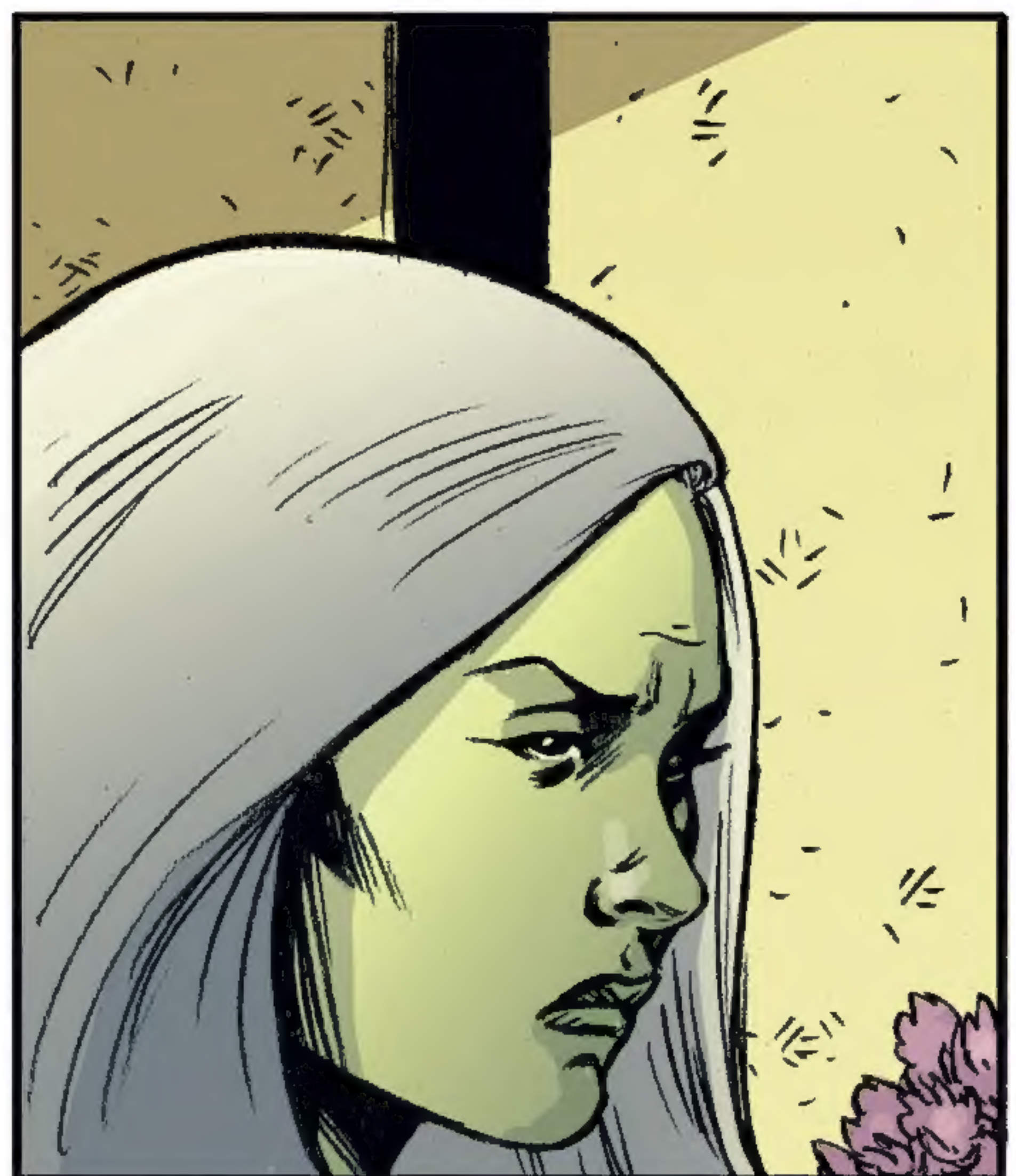
LORDS BELOW. IT'S **WORSE** THAN I THOUGHT.

YOU DON'T ACTUALLY HAVE ANY IDEA WHO YOUR MOTHER **WAS**, DO YOU?



PLEASE DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE I'M AN IMBECILE.

IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY, **SAY** IT.





OKAY, WHY NOT?

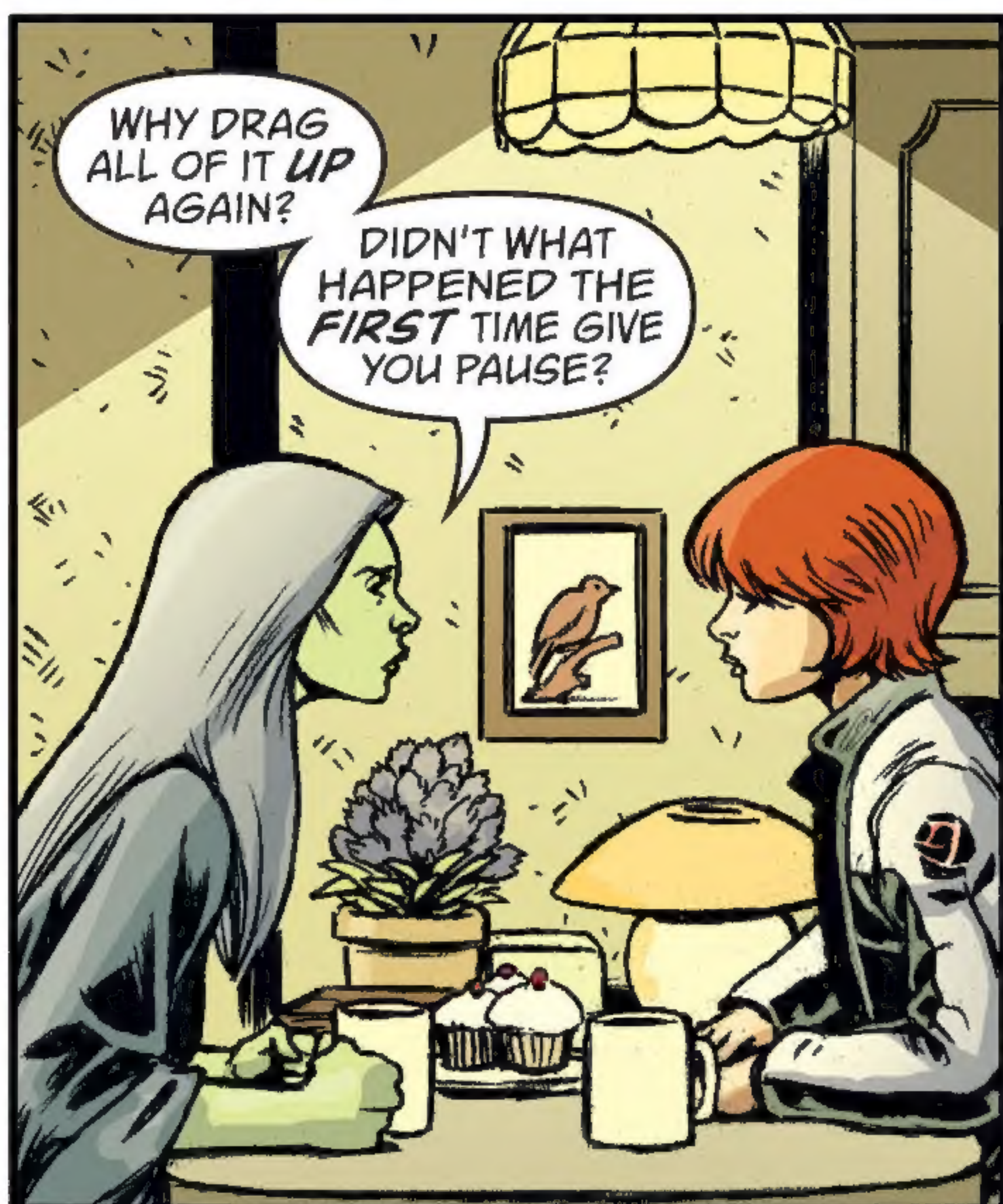
BUT MY REMEDIAL HISTORY LESSONS DON'T COME FREE.



FIRST, YOU HAVE TO ANSWER A QUESTION OR TWO FROM ME.

WHY CAMELOT?

HUH?



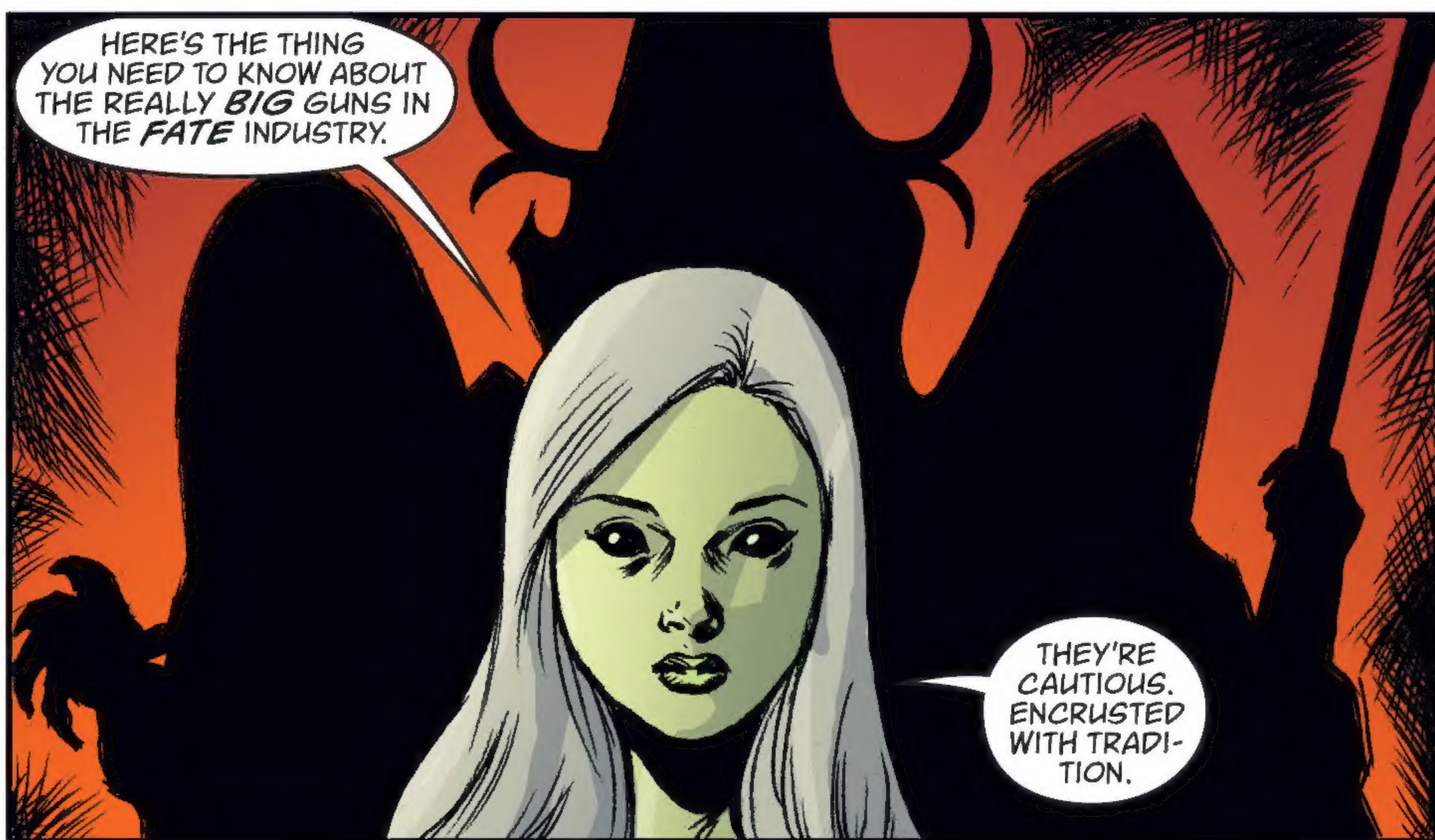
WHY DRAG ALL OF IT UP AGAIN?

DIDN'T WHAT HAPPENED THE FIRST TIME GIVE YOU PAUSE?




IT WAS--Y'KNOW--A GOLDEN TIME.

SURE, IF YOU ONLY REMEMBER THE GOOD PARTS.



HERE'S THE THING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE REALLY **BIG GUNS** IN THE **FATE** INDUSTRY.

THEY'RE CAUTIOUS. ENCRUSTED WITH TRADITION.

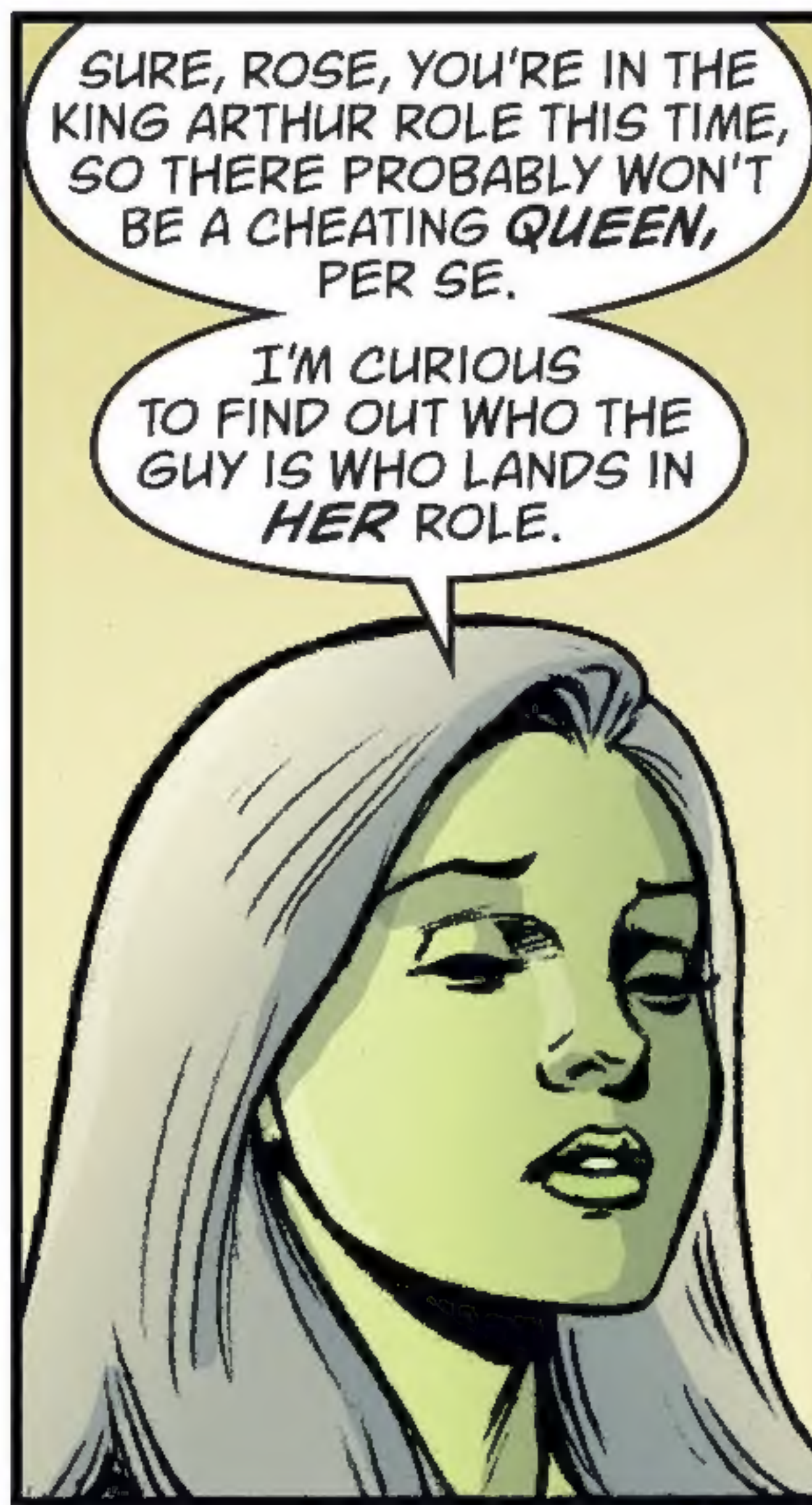


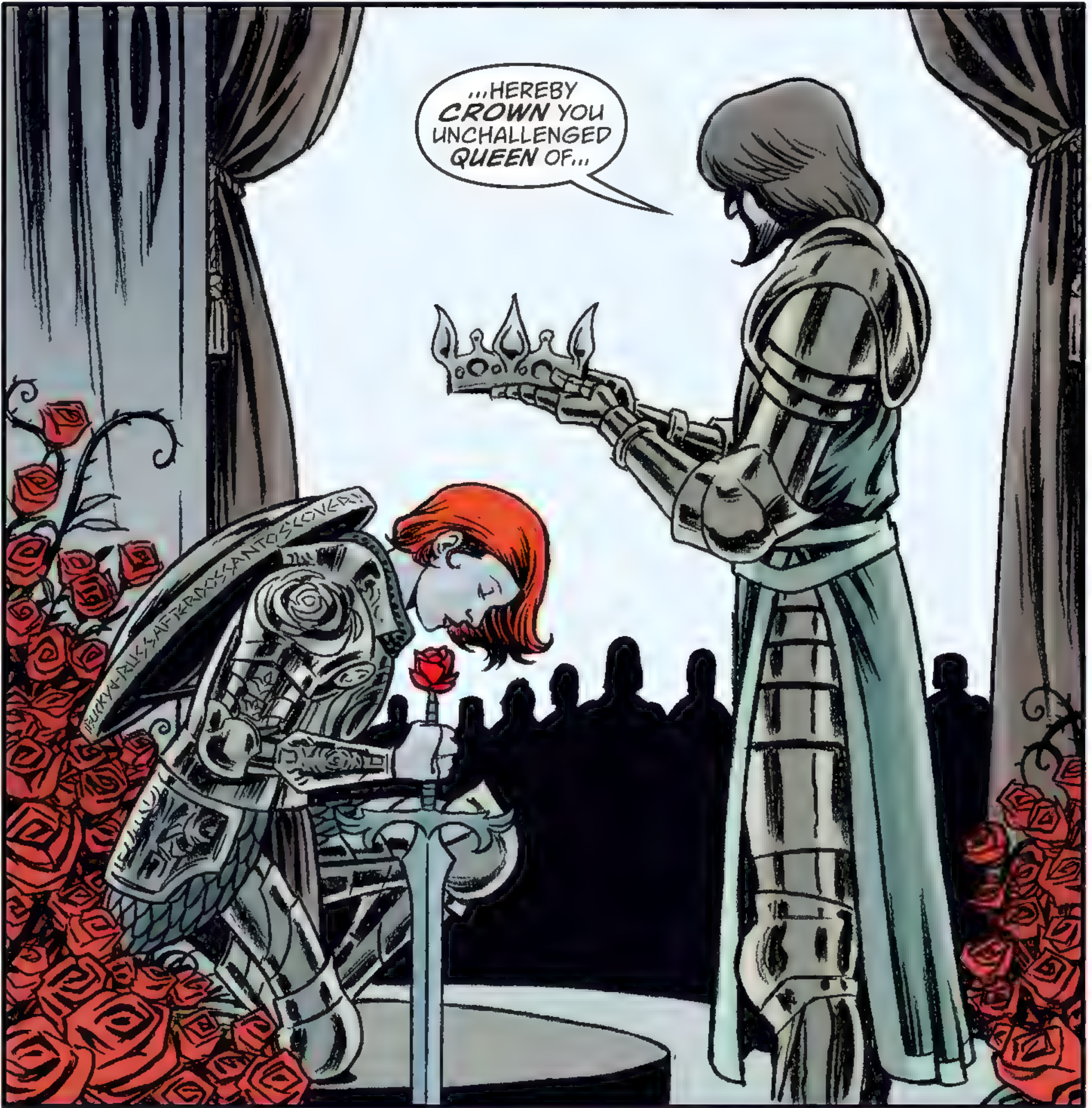
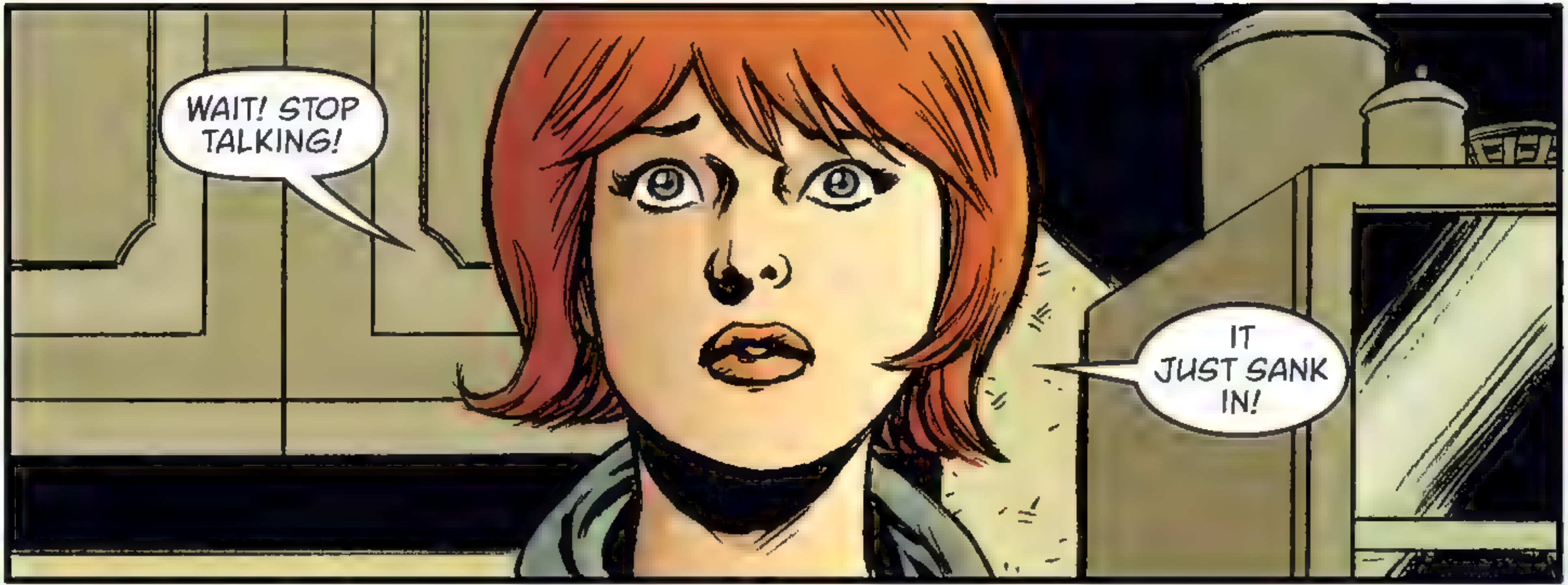
"THEY DON'T LIKE TO TAKE CHANCES, AND ARE ETERNALLY SUSPICIOUS OF INNOVATION. NOR DO THEY HAVE MUCH IN THE WAY OF IMAGINATION.

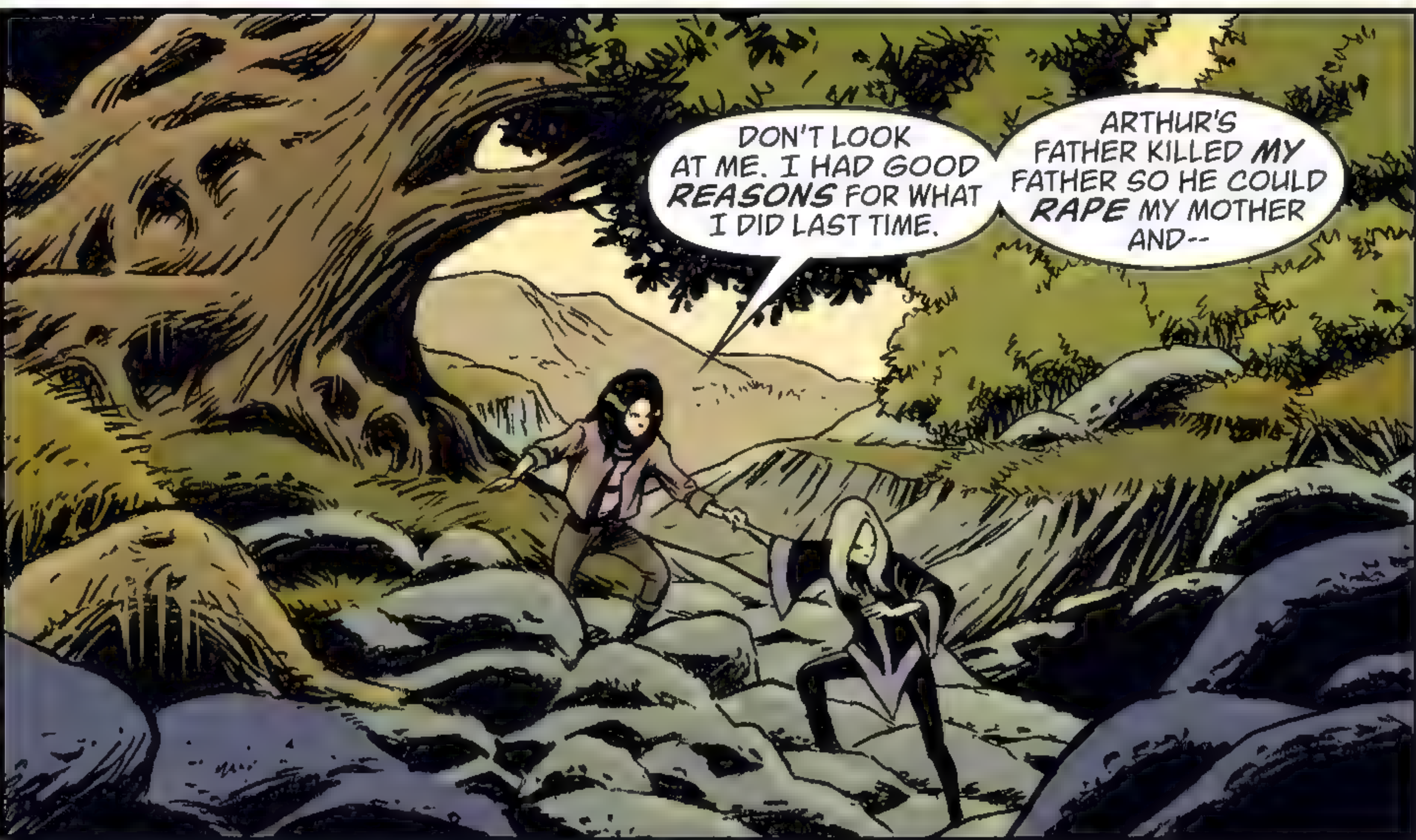
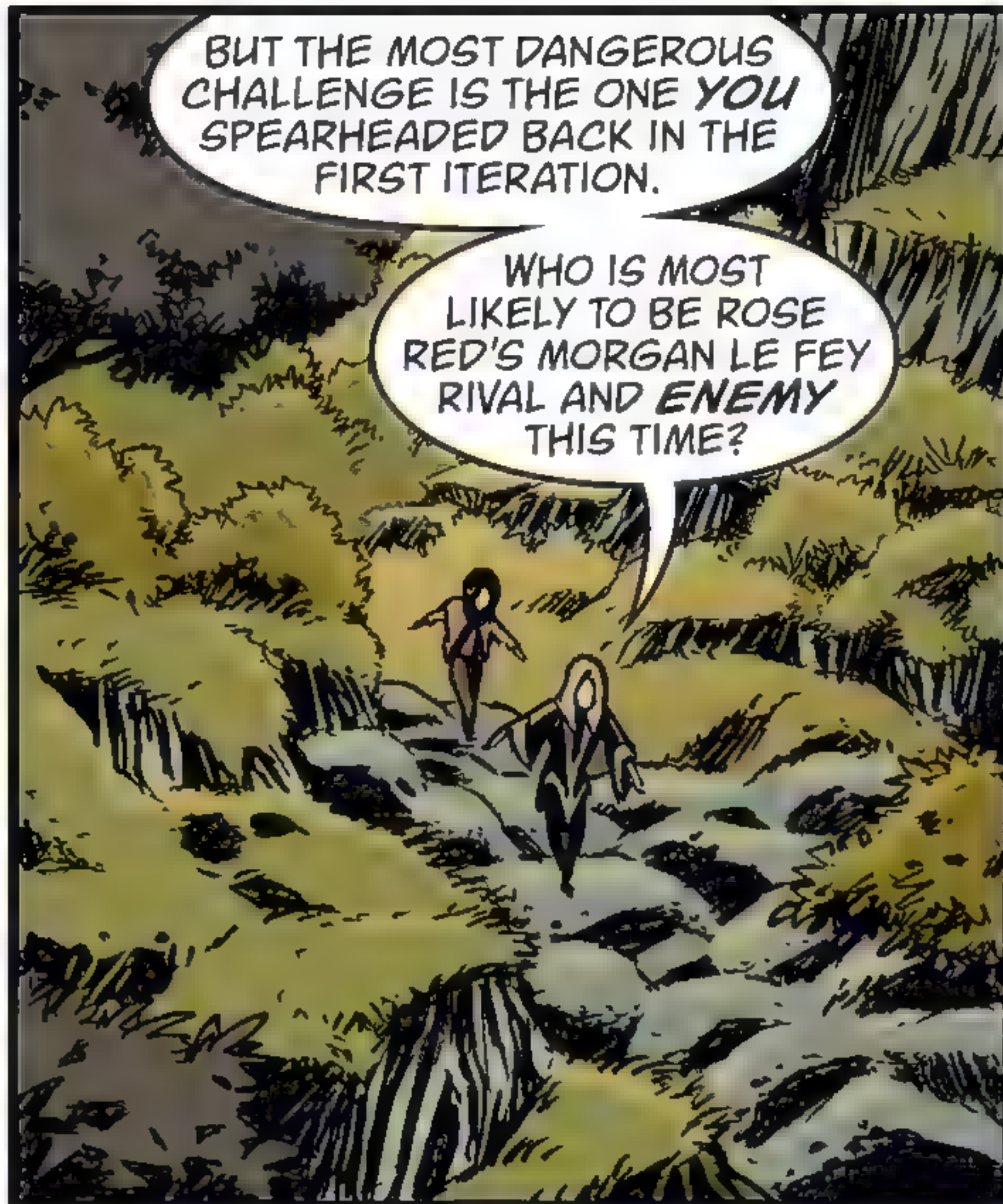
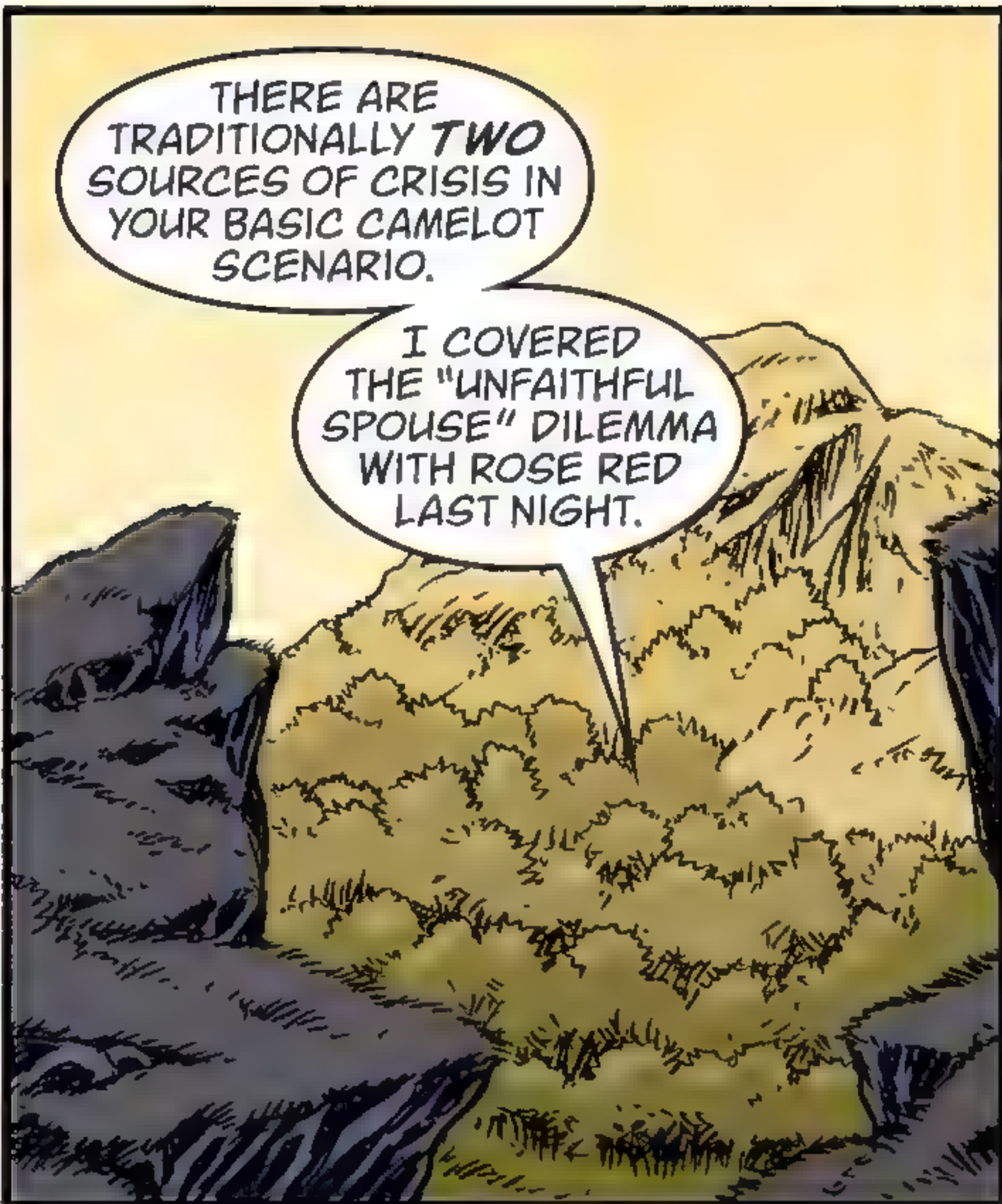
"LIKE CHILDREN, THEY MOSTLY WANT TO HEAR THE SAME COMFORTABLE AND BELOVED STORIES OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

"SO, WHEN YOU SET OUT TO RECREATE SOMETHING AS POWERFUL AND EVOCATIVE AS CAMELOT, YOU'RE PRACTICALLY **BEGGING** FOR TROUBLE.

"THE FATES ARE LIKELY TO STEP IN AND FORCE EVERYTHING TO HAPPEN **THIS** TIME JUST LIKE IT DID **LAST** TIME."



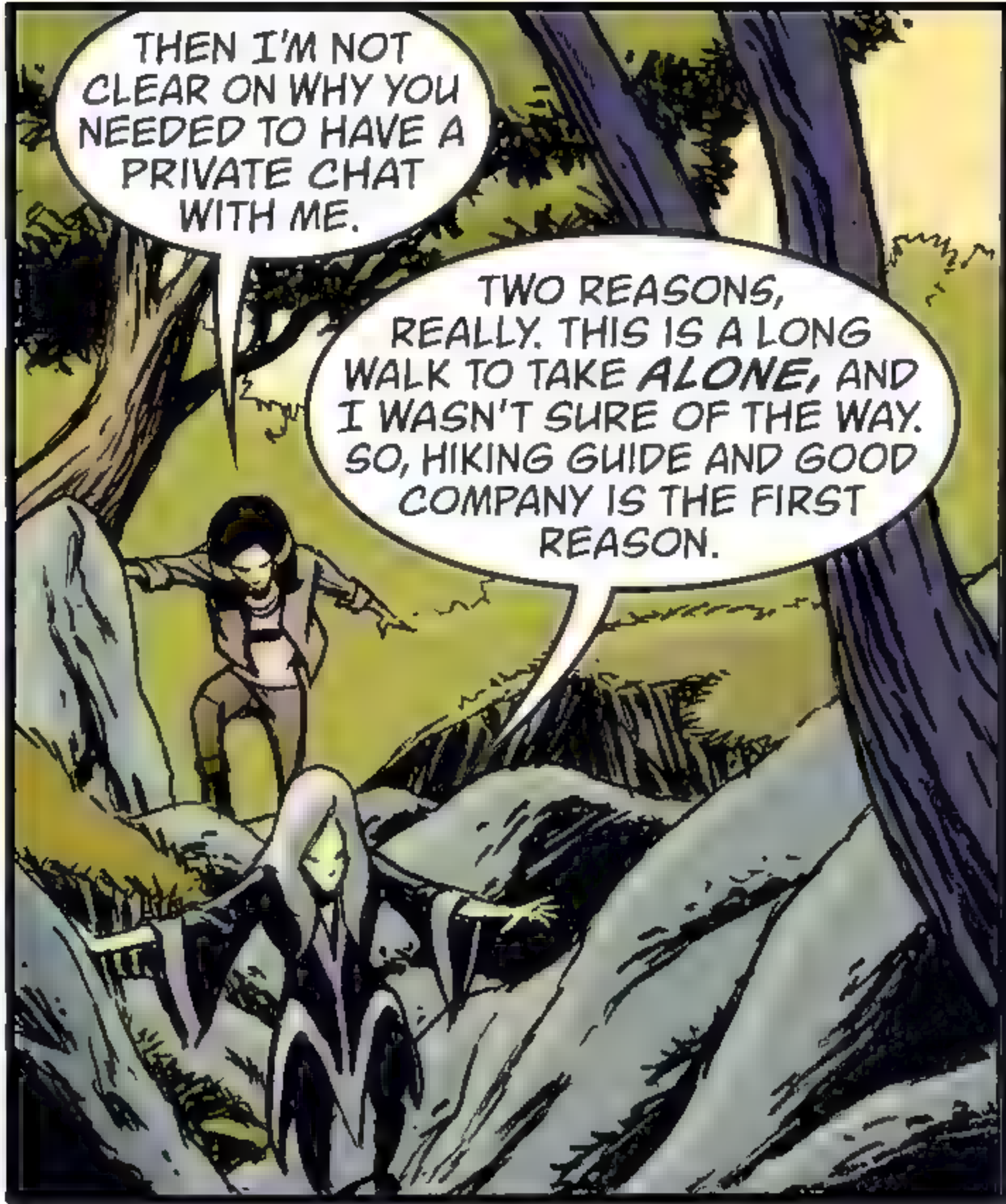






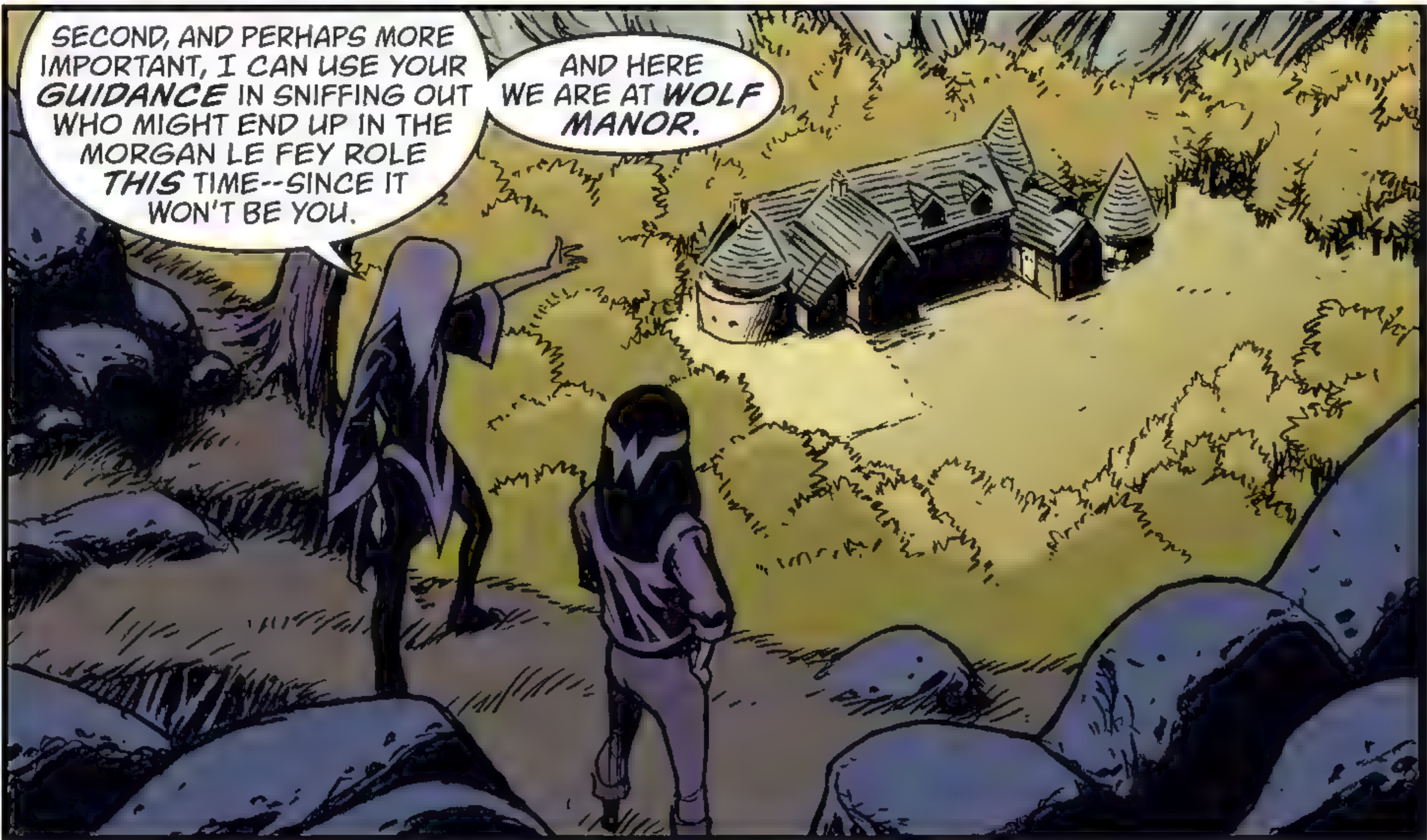
YOU AREN'T WORRIED I'LL BETRAY ROSE RED?

NOT EVEN A LITTLE BIT.



THEN I'M NOT CLEAR ON WHY YOU NEEDED TO HAVE A PRIVATE CHAT WITH ME.

TWO REASONS, REALLY. THIS IS A LONG WALK TO TAKE ALONE, AND I WASN'T SURE OF THE WAY. SO, HIKING GUIDE AND GOOD COMPANY IS THE FIRST REASON.



SECOND, AND PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANT, I CAN USE YOUR GUIDANCE IN SNIFFING OUT WHO MIGHT END UP IN THE MORGAN LE FEY ROLE THIS TIME--SINCE IT WON'T BE YOU.

AND HERE WE ARE AT WOLF MANOR.



WAIT! WOLF MANOR? LADIES OF THE MIST! YOU THINK IT'S SNOW?

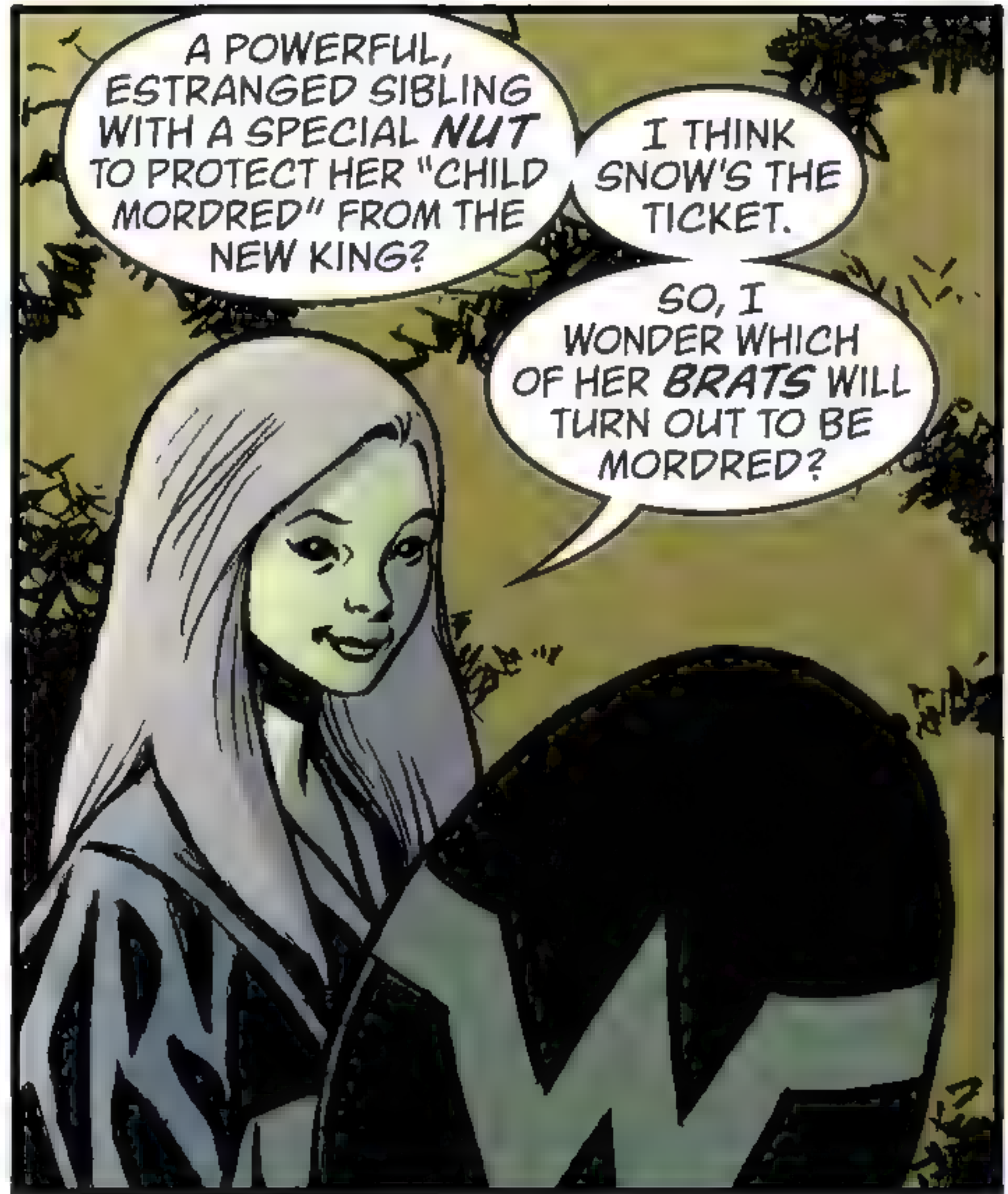
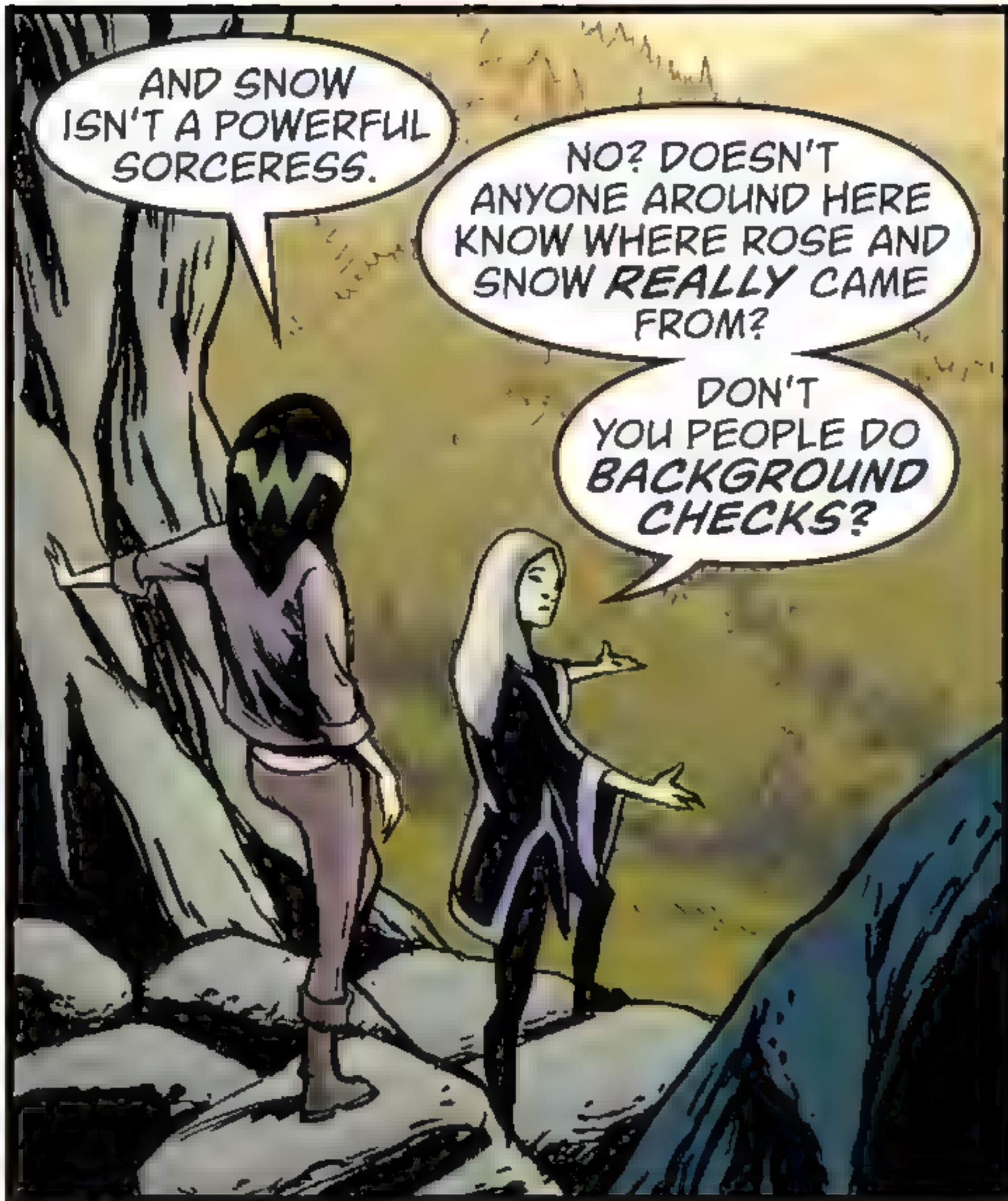
WHY NOT? YOU WERE ARTHUR'S SISTER.

HALF SISTER.



AND SNOW WHITE IS ROSE RED'S SISTER. I UNDERSTAND THERE'S BEEN A RECENT FALLING OUT BETWEEN THEM.

I THINK YOU'RE READING WAY TOO MUCH INTO MINOR SIMILARITIES. SNOW WON'T TURN ON ROSE RED. THAT SORT OF CRAP ISN'T IN HER MAKEUP.



WHAT THE HELL WAS I *THINKING*?
I SHOULD *NEVER* HAVE KNOCKED
ON THAT DOOR.

HELLO?

GOOD
MORNING,
YOUNG MAN. IS
YOUR *MOTHER*
HOME?

SHE'S POOPING--
UH--I MEAN, SHE'S--
UHM--*INDISPOSED*
RIGHT NOW.

TO SUDDENLY SEE MY
FUTURE, MY *FATE*--
EXPOSED. LAID BARE
BEFORE ME.

WOULD YOU
LIKE TO COME IN?
SHE'LL BE OUT
SHORTLY.

LAKE?

WHAT'S THE
MATTER?



YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'VE SEEN A GHOST.

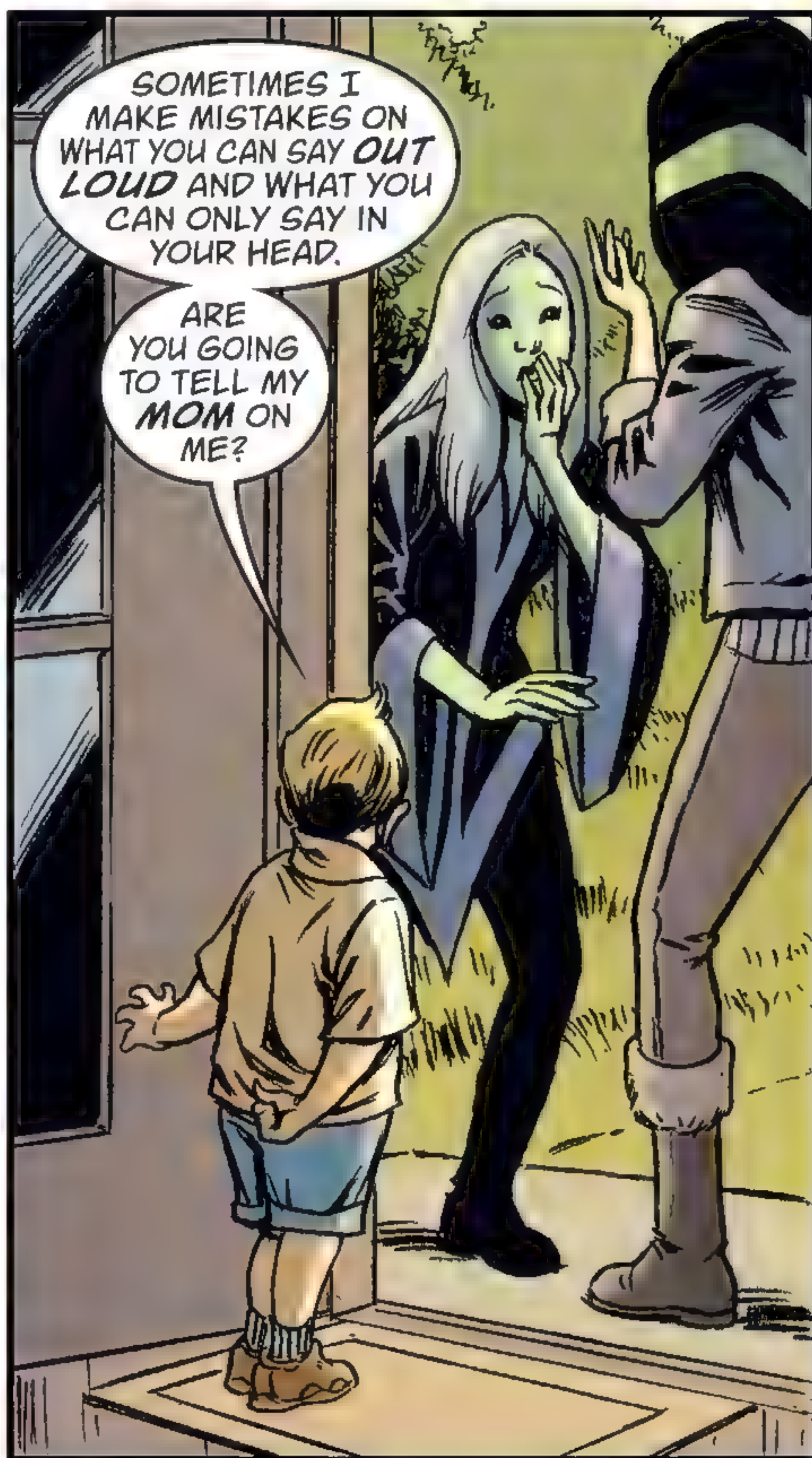
LET ME GO!

WE HAVE TO LEAVE.



I DON'T UNDERSTAND. WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT?

IS IT BECAUSE I SAID POOP? I DIDN'T MEAN TO. IT JUST SLIPPED OUT.



SOMETIMES I MAKE MISTAKES ON WHAT YOU CAN SAY OUT LOUD AND WHAT YOU CAN ONLY SAY IN YOUR HEAD.

ARE YOU GOING TO TELL MY MOM ON ME?

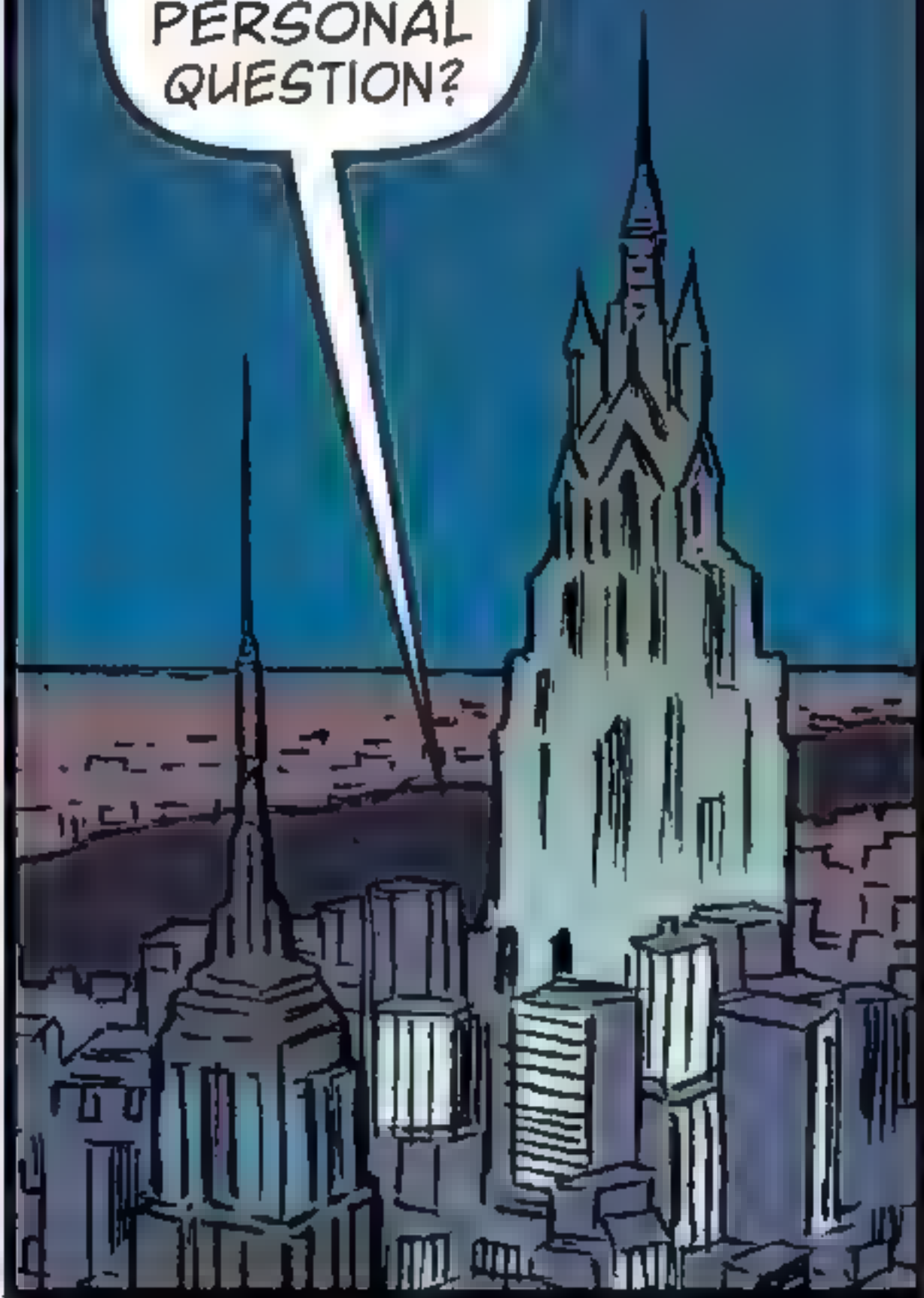


WE NEED TO GO NOW!

--THE HELL?

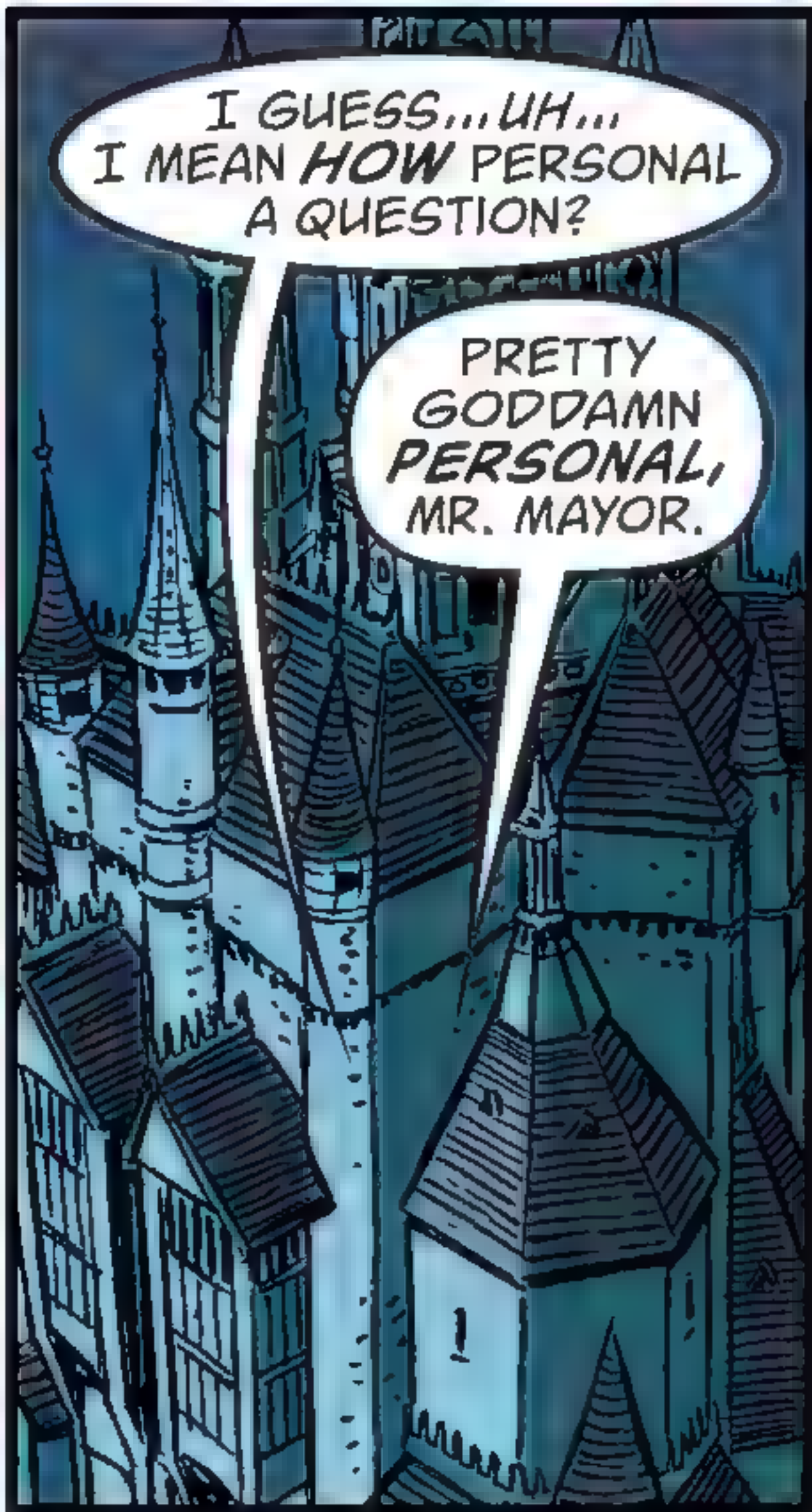
THAT EVENING...

CAN I ASK YOU A PERSONAL QUESTION?



I GUESS... UH... I MEAN **HOW PERSONAL** A QUESTION?

PRETTY **GODDAMN PERSONAL**, MR. MAYOR.



UH, WELL, I--UH--I GUESS THAT WOULD BE OKAY, IF-- UHM--SURE. WHY NOT? FIRE AWAY.

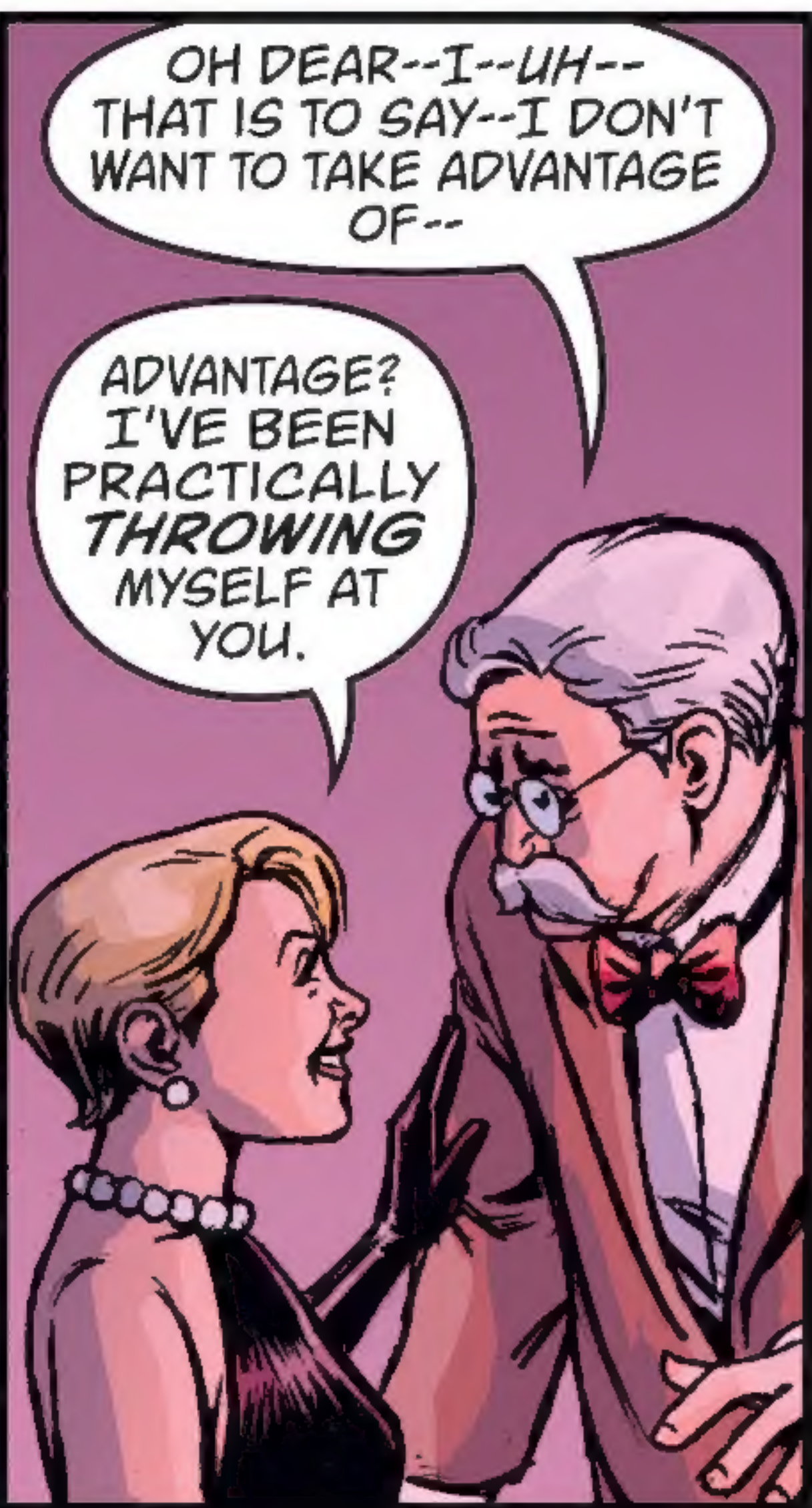


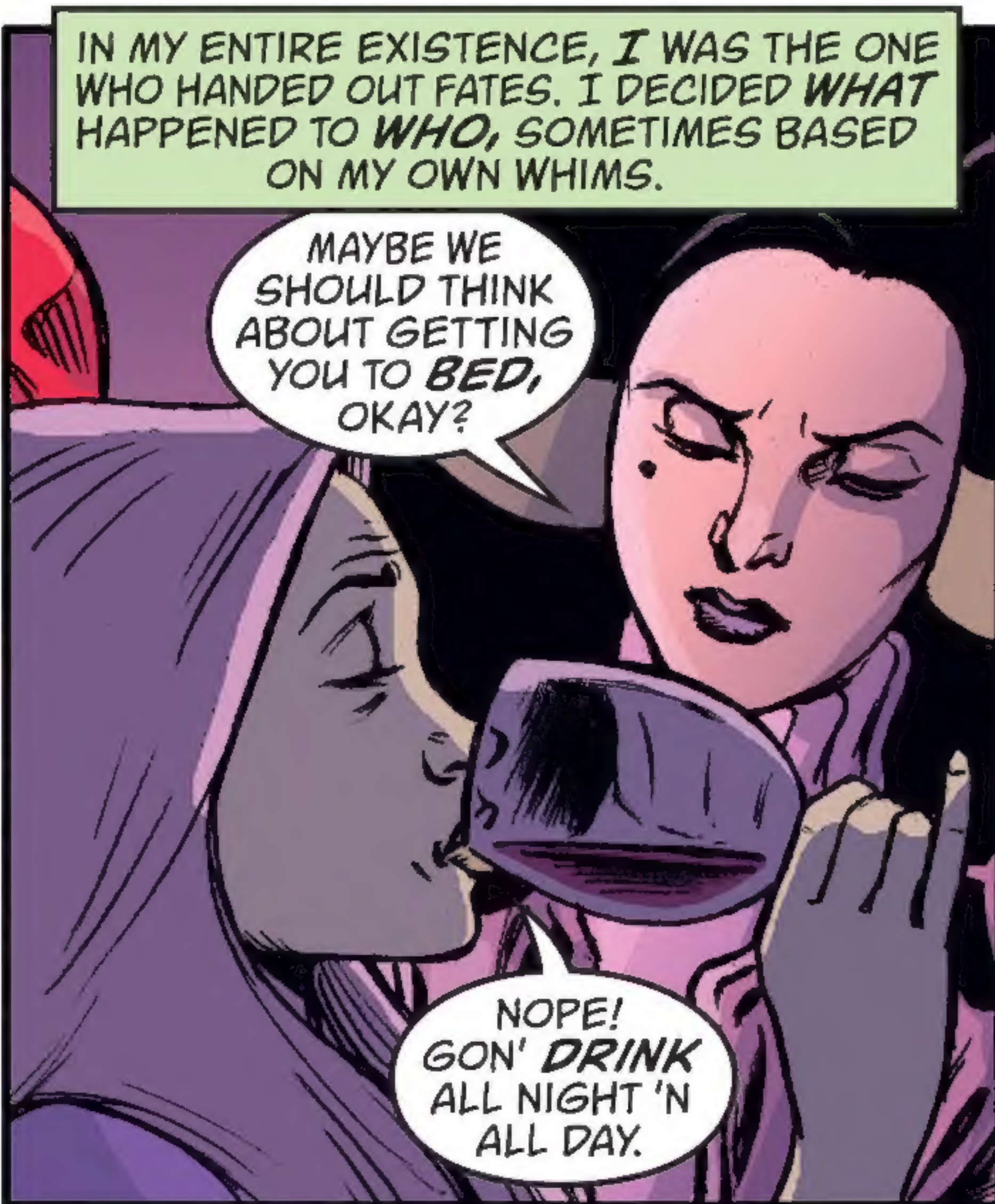
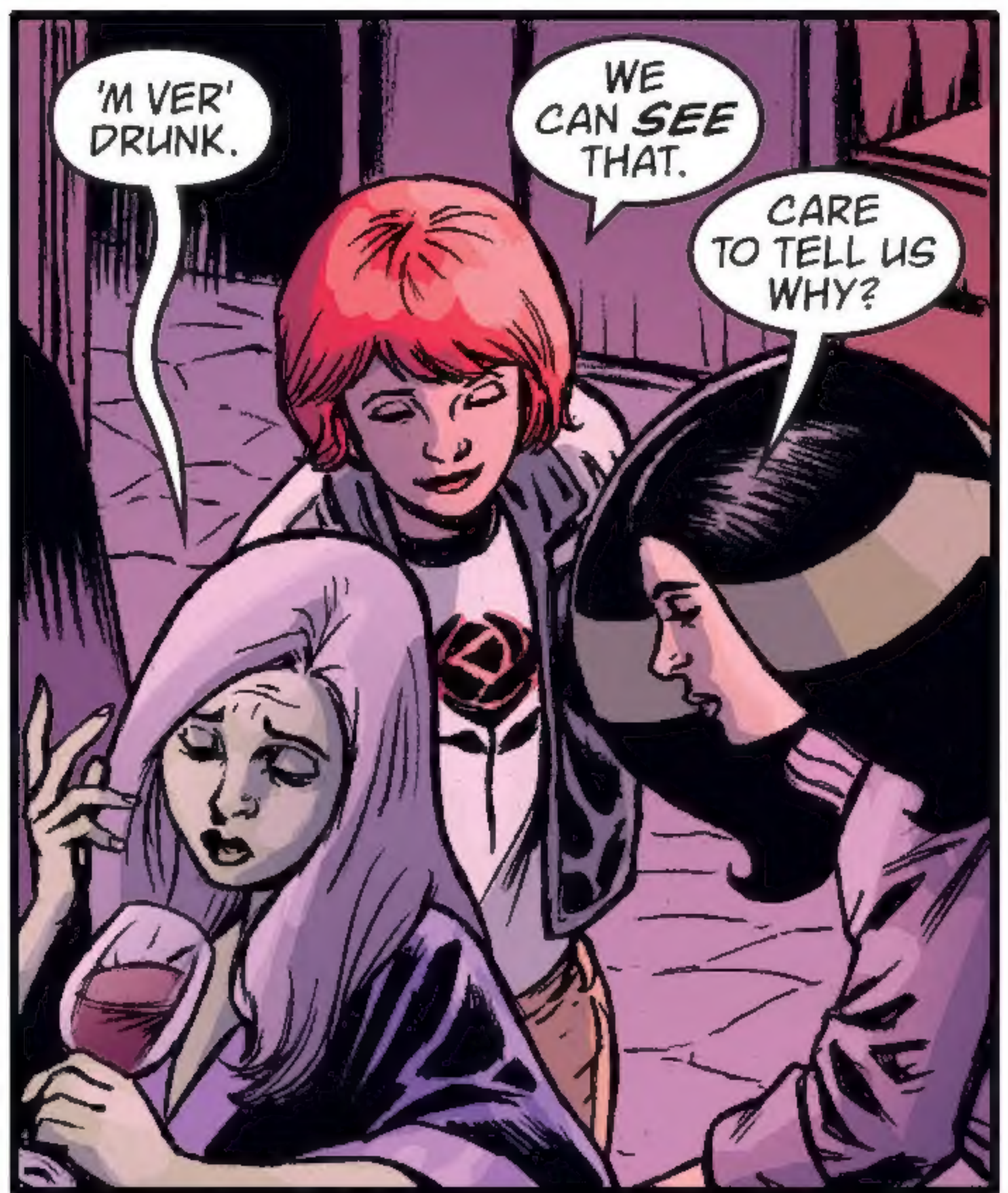
WHY HAVEN'T YOU MADE A **MOVE** ON ME YET?

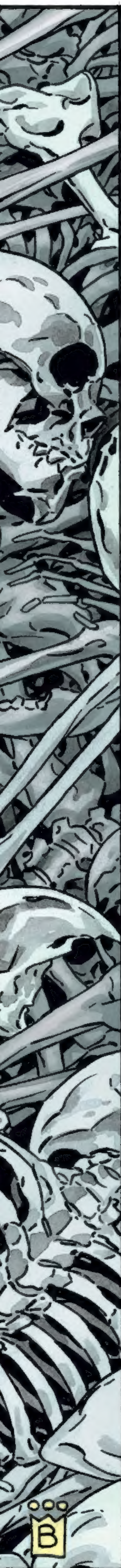
EXCUSE ME?

YOU KNOW, WHY HAVEN'T YOU **POUNCED?** MADE A PASS? ATTEMPTED TO MINISTER UNTO MY FROTHY **LOINS?**









NEXT: WHAT SHE DOES.





*Wishing you a happy holiday from
all the members of Empire.*